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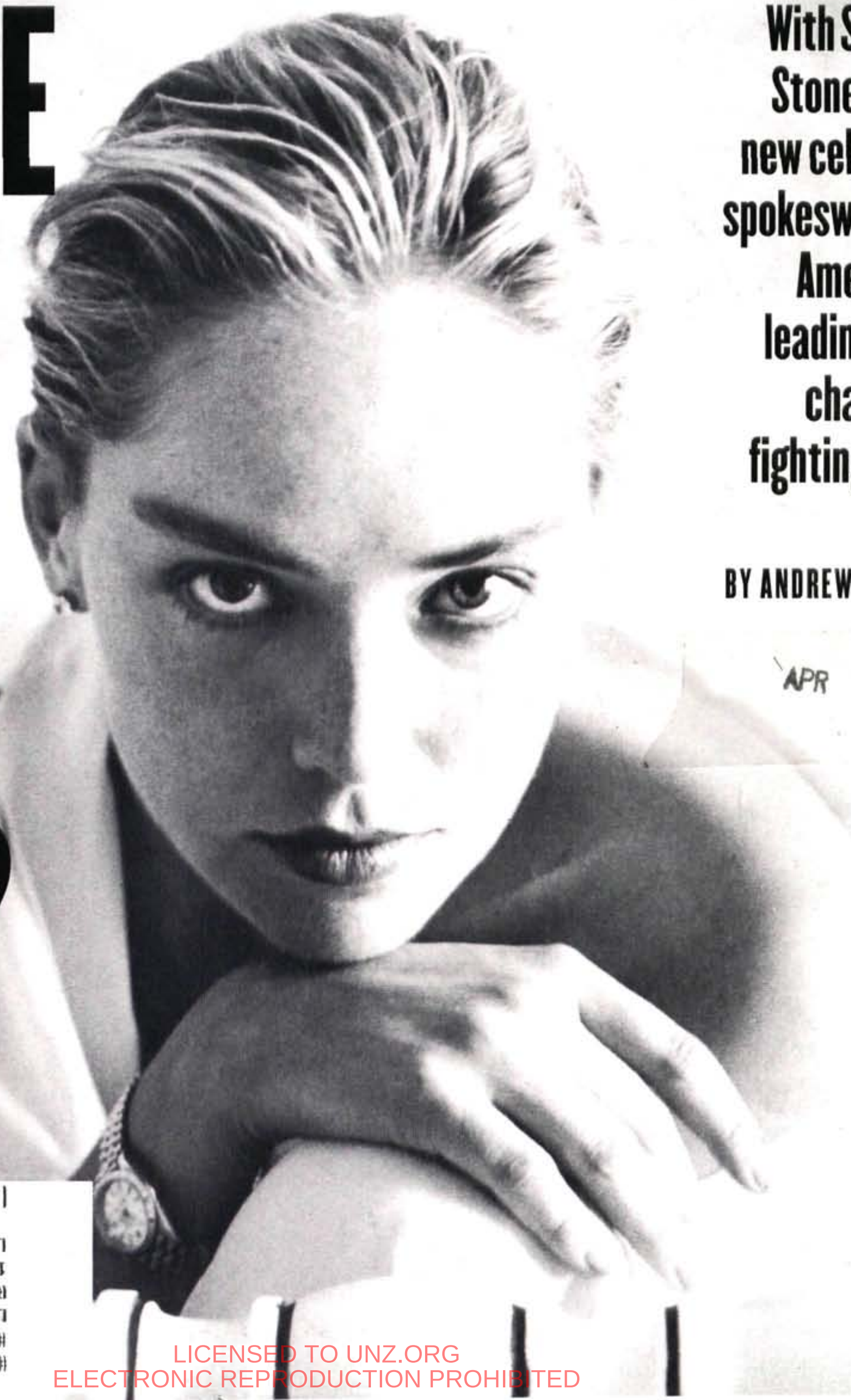

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BY ANDREW JACOBS

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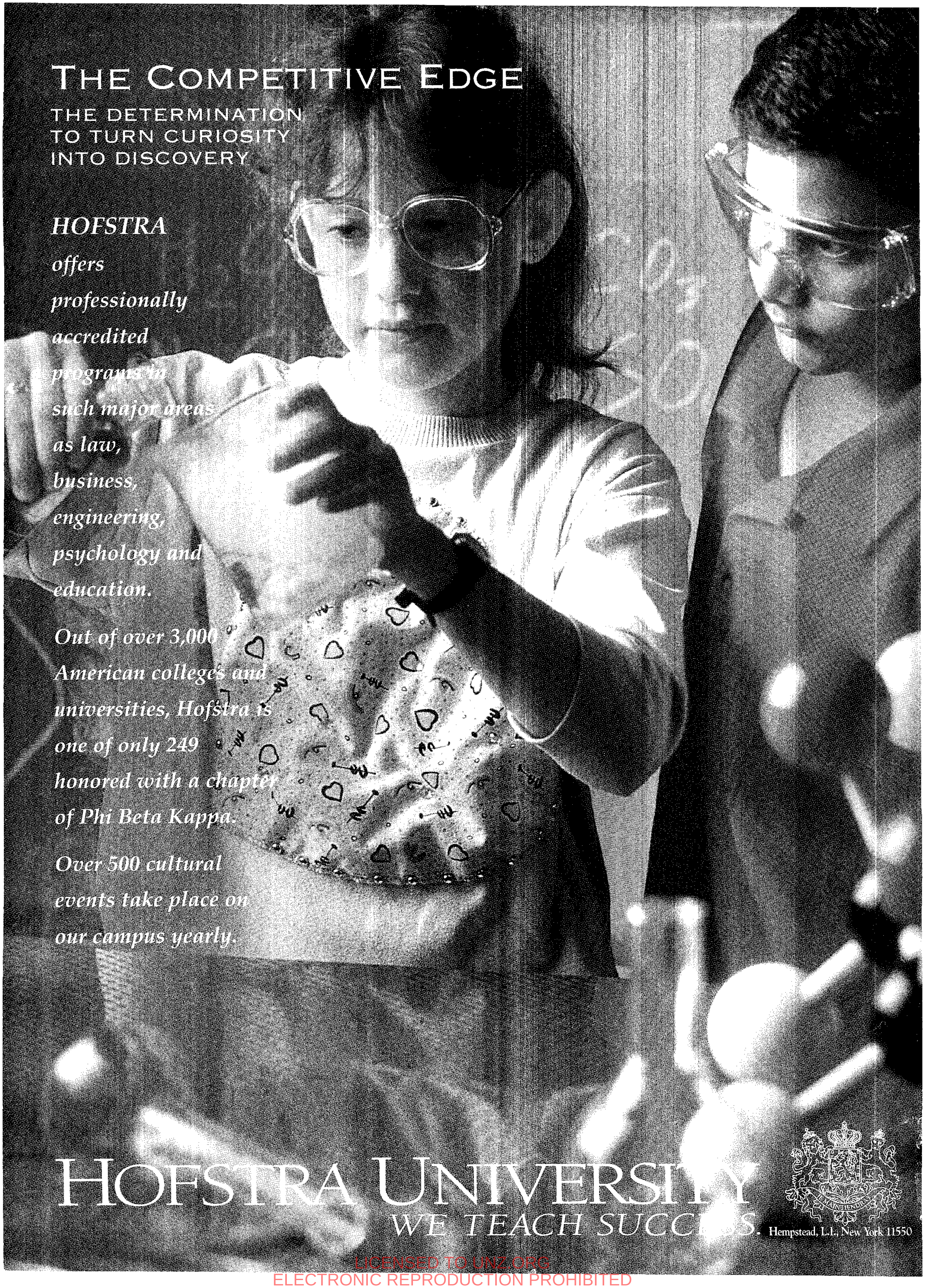

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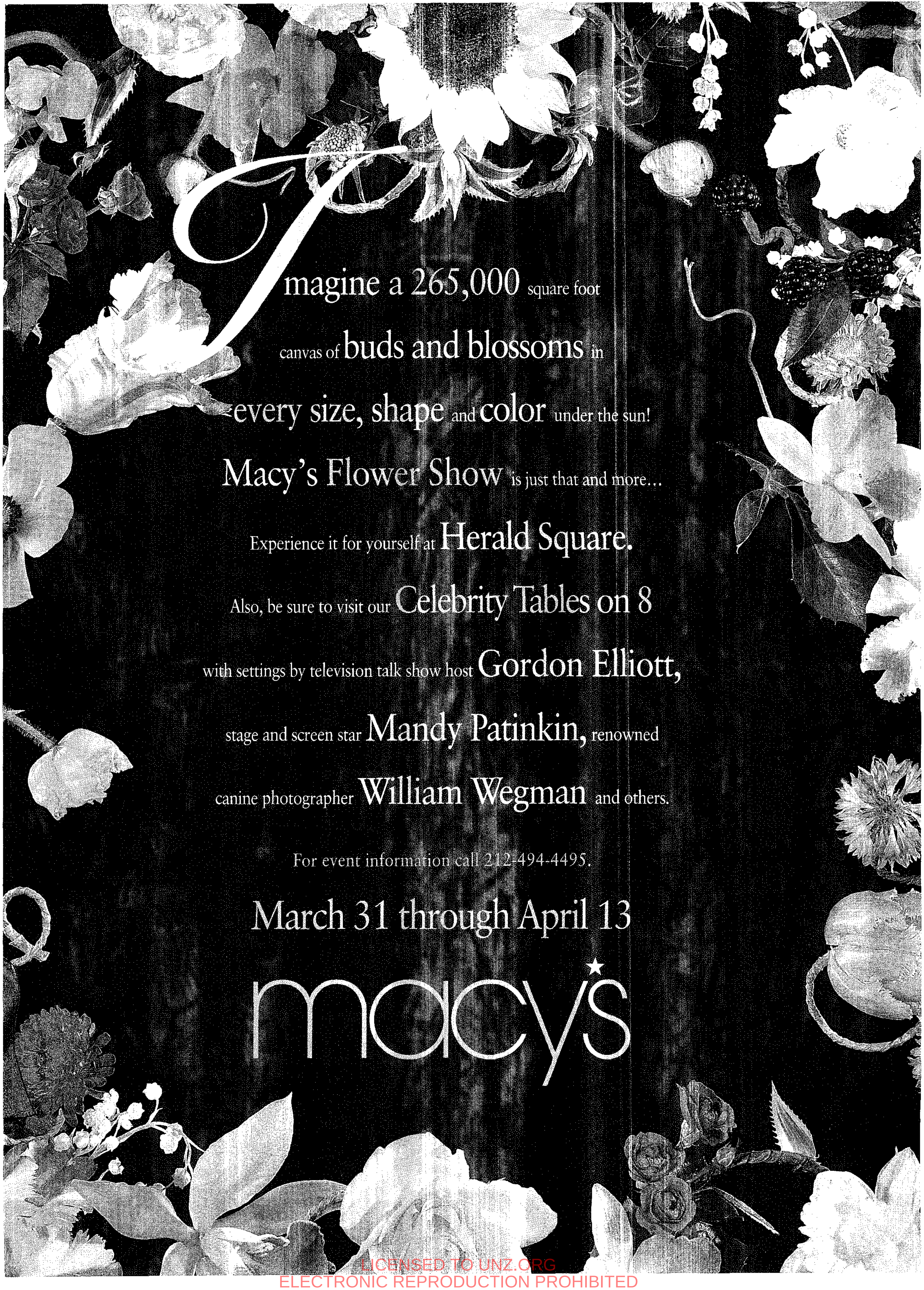

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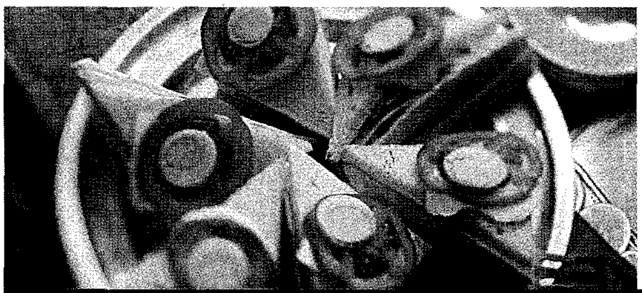

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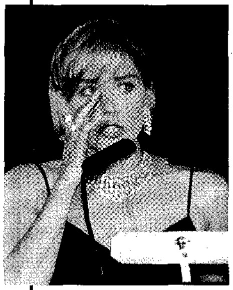
TOM STODDARD, PAGE 28



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By Andrew Jacobs

Fourteen years into the AIDS crisis, a wave of apathy and donor burnout threatens many of the nation's top AIDS groups. None, however, has been affected as much as AMFAR, the world's leading AIDS-research foundation. Kayoed by declining contributions and poor management, it was threatened with extinction. Now, with new leadership, a new sense of purpose, and a new spokesperson, Sharon Stone, it's fighting its way back.

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In the seventies, shaggy, swashbuckling British entrepreneur Richard Branson started Virgin Records and beat the major labels at their own game. Since then, he's made a billion-dollar splash in businesses ranging from cola to stock brokerage to condoms. Next month, he'll open the world's largest record store in Times Square. Is America ready for Branson's brand of wildass capitalism?

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Collette Avital, Israel's consul-general for New York, discusses the state of the Middle East peace process in the *New York* Magazine forum on Tuesday, April 2, at 9 P.M. On CompuServe, *go* NYTALK.

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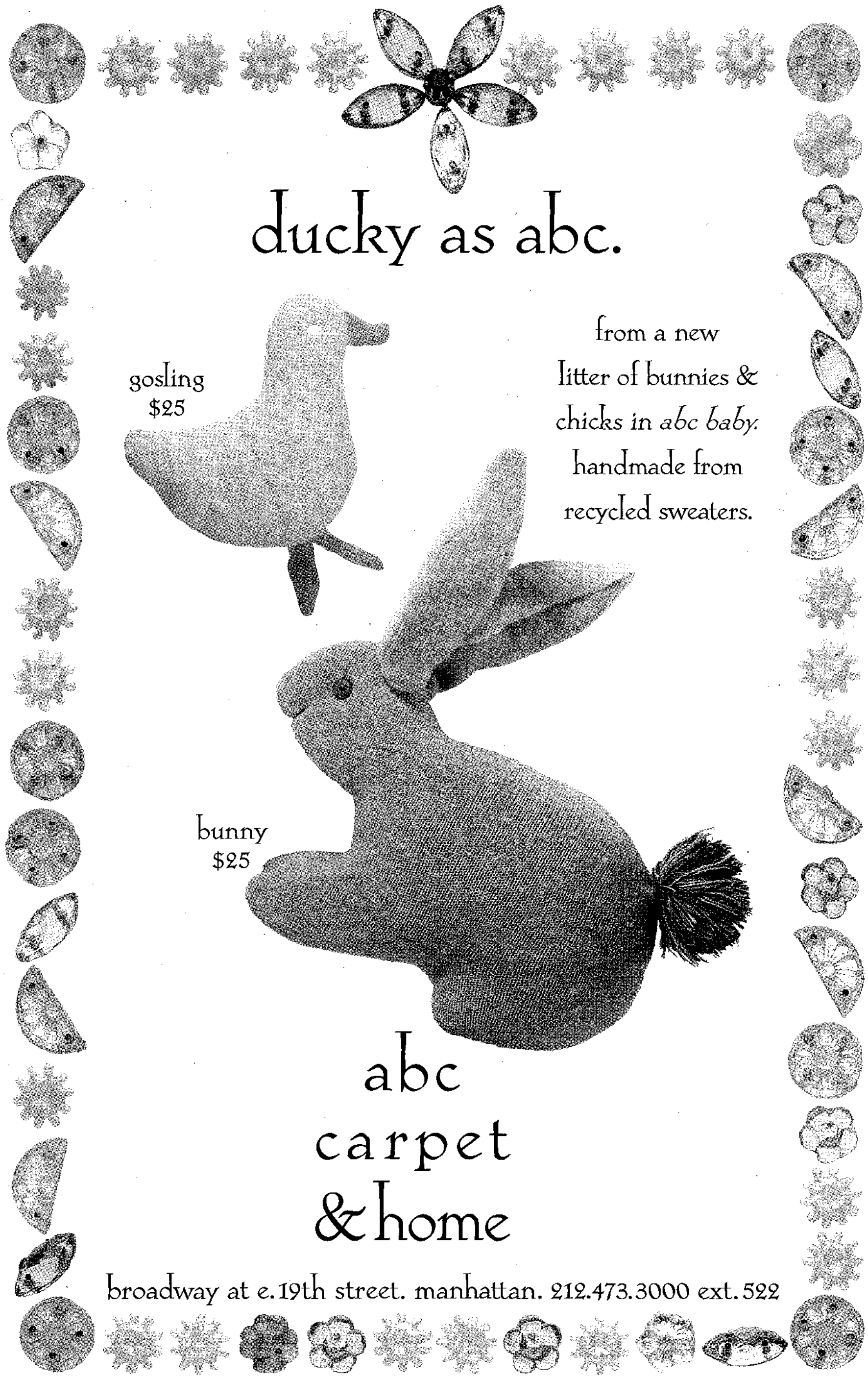

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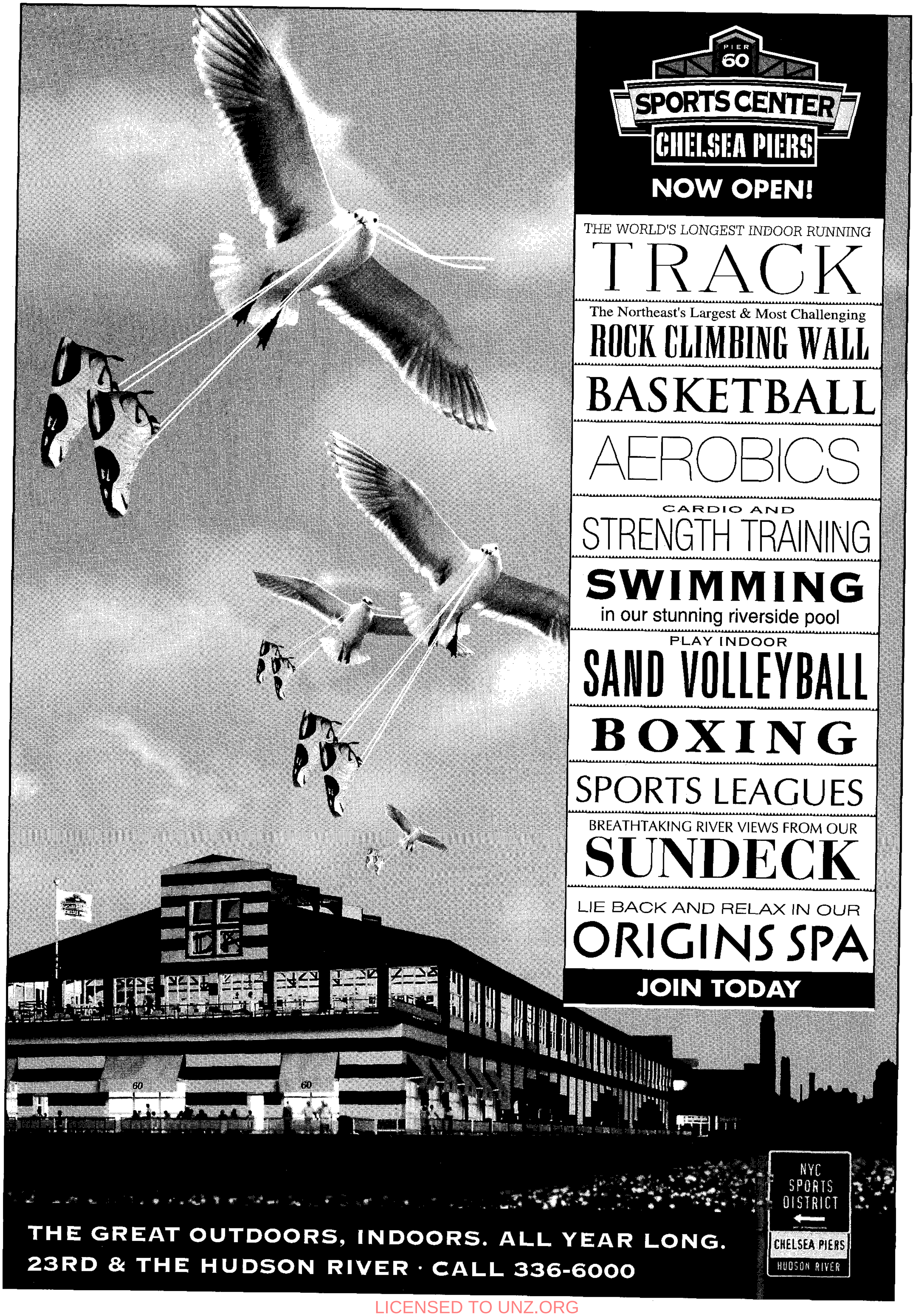
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Business As Usual

Rattner vs. Rohatyn; AT&T's real plans for the Internet; appalled by A. J. Benza; an appreciation of John Simon.

AS SOMEONE WITH MORE THAN A passing interest in Steven Rattner's life and career, I must take exception to Suzanna Andrews's statement "Rattner's simple biography has developed a high gloss . . . in good part due to Rattner's own artful salesmanship" ["A Nasty Little War on Wall Street," March 11].

[My son] Steven grew up during the sixties and seventies and successfully avoided the drug, hippie, and cop-out culture of the era. As editor of the Brown University *Herald,* he was chosen by the legendary James Reston to be a New York *Times* reporter serving in the Washington, New York, and London bureaus for nine years.

When Steven gambled on a career change at age 30, it was without benefit of an M.B.A., family wealth, or business or social connections. His rise to partner at Morgan Stanley after seventeen months was not the result of a P.R. blitz.

In a *New Yorker* magazine article last spring, Ken Auletta referred to Steven as the leading investment banker in media and communications mergers and acquisitions. To be first in this demanding field requires more than "artful salesmanship." Simple biography?

George Rattner
KINGS POINT, N.Y.

THAT WAS A NASTY LITTLE PIECE ON FELIX Rohatyn. Is this not the same Felix Rohatyn who saved this city from financial debacle? This blatant self-promotion of Steven Rattner would make any decent man "icy with anger." And Felix Rohatyn strikes me as, above all, a decent and honorable man merely working to maintain the high standards, good ethics, and proper business values for a reputable firm that he helped form.

Nima Isham
MANHATTAN

FROM 1973 TO 1983, FELIX ROHATYN served on the board of Independence House, a small residence for homeless New York City youths, which I directed. Recruited by board president Jim Lipton, Felix was our problem solver and raised substantial funds to keep the program alive without seeking publicity. During his frequent evening visits, he was sincere and easy to talk with. Felix showed a lot of heart as he helped guide Independence House and similar, larger programs. He cared quietly about the struggle of disadvantaged city youths to become independent, and he has enabled many of them to succeed. I feel fortunate to have known this complex, sensitive, and good man.

William Peck
ELDRED, N.Y.

Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They should be addressed to Letters to the Editor, New York *Magazine, 755 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017-5998 or sent via e-mail to 76702.2510@compuserve.com. Please include a daytime phone number.*

Soured

IT IS APPALLING THAT THE NEW YORK *Daily News* sees fit to employ A. J. Benza as a gossip columnist ["The Sweet Smell of Success," by Nancy Jo Sales, March 18]. A thug who is strung out on alcohol and egomania does not contribute anything. He cannot even write. This article should be a case study for the Columbia School of Journalism—never allow this to happen to a newspaper!

Linda Murray
MANHATTAN

Communication Skills

DAVID BENNAHUM'S ARTICLE "DOES AT&T Know What It's Doing?" [March 18] purported to examine AT&T's entire business strategy. Instead, the article zeroed in on just one piece and still managed to get it completely wrong.

Let me make at least one thing clear: AT&T knows that it's impossible to control or dominate the Internet. After all, openness is part of the Internet's "everyperson" appeal. Contrary to Mr. Bennahum's assertions, AT&T embraces the openness of the Internet. As we told Mr. Bennahum numerous times, AT&T's goal is to extend the benefits of the Internet to as many of our customers as possible. We plan to give customers Internet service the way they'd expect it from AT&T—safe, fun, and easy to use.

But that's not the whole story. At the new AT&T—born of our restructuring into three companies—we're creating a company that customers can rely on for their business and personal communications (local, long distance, wireless; from basic calls to global networks), online services, and access to home entertainment.

Alex J. Mandl
President, AT&T
BASKING RIDGE, N.J.

Simon's Standard

I'M TIRED OF THE CONSTANT CRITICISM OF John Simon ["Letters," March 11]. Do any of these people actually read his reviews? In 1990, 1991, and 1992, I, along with some friends, saw many Off Broadway plays free in exchange for ushering. I made a point of reading every review John Simon wrote about the plays after I had seen them. My assessment was usually far harsher than Simon's—we often left the theater happy that we hadn't paid or angry that we had wasted our time. John Simon has a reputation for cruelty because he criticizes people's physical appearances. If you think John Simon doesn't love the theater, or that his standards are too high, you haven't read his work. He hates fat people. He loves the theater.

Elizabeth Greenspan
PHILADELPHIA, PENN.

Laugh Track

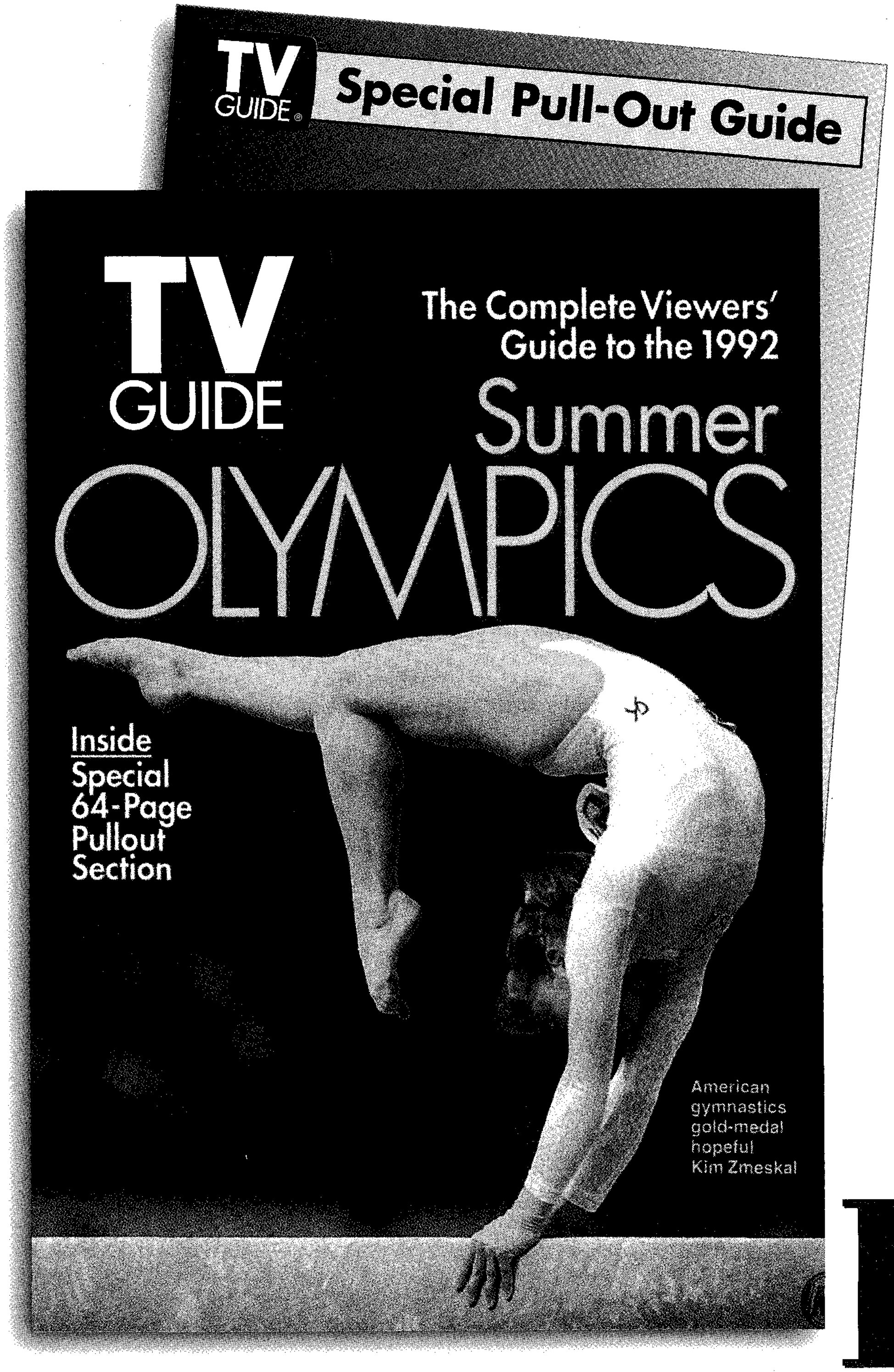
JESSE GREEN'S "THE LAST WALK" [MARCH 4] had me in stitches. I laughed out loud. *New York* brings the energy of New York City to life. I am a native New Yorker and miss the city terribly. Thank God for the creative writers at your magazine.

K. Allison Bobb
ROCHESTER, N.Y.

Corrections The photograph on the cover of the March 25 issue ("Design 1996") was of Tommy Tune's apartment, designed by DD Allen of Pierce Allen.

In the April 1 issue, the column on J. M. Weston shoes ("The Goods: Brogues Gallery") was written by Rene Chun.

In addition, Brent Staples was misidentified as an editor at the New York *Times* in the April 1 "Intelligencer." He is a writer on the editorial page. ■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BY BETH LANDMAN AND DEBORAH MITCHELL

INTELLIGENCER

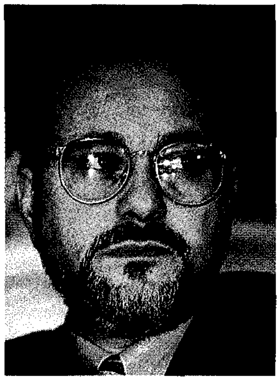
A FORST EXIT AT THE *DAILY NEWS*?

The ink is barely dry on **Don Forst**'s contract but there's already talk that the Metro editor of the *Daily News* is in trouble. According to sources at the volatile tabloid, newsroom honchos haven't exactly rolled out the welcome mat. "I'd call it benign neglect," one reporter says of the chilly reception given the former editor-in-chief of New York *Newsday* by managing editor **Arthur Browne** and executive editor **Debbie Krenek,** among others. But some maintain that Forst's hands-off style contributes to his problems. "I think if he had come in and really wowed them, they would have been won over," says one member of the *News* management. "But here's this very slow-talking, mumbly guy who strolls around the newsroom while the reporters are literally running. Everyone here has come out of one school of journalism, and he's come out of another. It's frustrating all around." Reportedly, *News* editor-in-chief Martin Dunn is staying quietly neutral, but word is that the pressure is mounting to move the more highbrow Forst out of the post. "The paper didn't need this now," says another disgruntled newsroom source. "The sooner they get him out of the building, the happier they'll be. And by the time it happens, Don will probably be glad to go."

FOR SANDRA BERNHARD, LIFE'S A BITCH

Leave it to **Sandra Bernhard** to rock the boat. The habitually impolitic comedienne created a furor over some harsh heckling she doled out during a performance on a gay-oriented cruise last week. Apparently angry about her accommodations onboard, Bernhard took her aggressions out on the audience, wondering aloud whether fellow performer **Nell Carter** could fit into her cabin, referring to gay men as *bitches,* and so berating one audience member that he ran out of the room. After an angry vacationer threw a drink at the comic (prompting an enthusiastic chorus of "Go, go, go!"), the effusively apologetic president of the travel company responsible for the cruise finally got the crowd under control, and Bernhard left the ship in a hurry the next morning at Mazatlán. Although Bernhard insists that she had a "fabulous time," her booking agent admits that "[the performance] was just a little strong."

Sandra Bernhard: Walks the plank



Noach Dear: Catering to his constituency

STREISAND TURNS OVER A NEW LEAF

Its budget overruns are bad enough, but now **Barbra Streisand's** *The Mirror Has Two Faces* is also having trouble keeping up with Mother Nature. A month behind in shooting, the California-based director can't quite adjust to the seasonal pressures of working in New York. When the film, which is written to take place in the fall, ended up shooting well into the dead of winter, the crew discovered they were lacking a key autumnal element: leaves on the trees. Not one to take no for an answer, Streisand summarily dispatched some production assistants to tape on the missing leaves. Pleased with the foliage, she ordered production continued, and at long last, shooting is *almost* finished. The final hitch? A scene that takes place in the spring, a season even the resourceful Streisand can't re-create. As a result, the movie is going on hiatus until later this month.

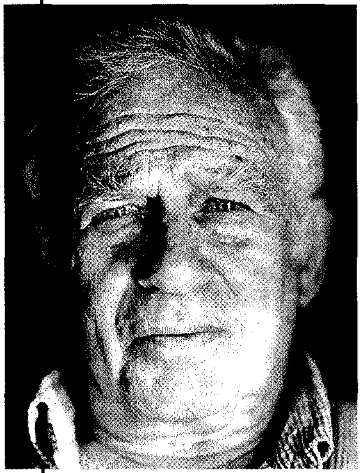
Streisand: Fooling Mother Nature

IS THE CITI LOSING SLEEP OVER BURMA?

There are just some contingencies public-relations people don't bank on. In celebration of its centenary as a worldwide financial institution, Citibank decided it would be a good idea to open up its hundredth international branch. The first choice for that all-important site? Myanmar, the dictatorship formerly known as Burma, whose human-rights violations include the six-year detention of Nobel Prize winner **Aung San Suu Kyi** and a recent foray into the slave trade. **John Morris,** a spokesman for the bank, denied that Burma was the designee, but added that "political considerations are usually among the least of our concerns." Meanwhile Citibank, wisely stepping away from a potential P.R. firebomb, is seeking an alternate location for its centennial fiesta. The current front-runner? Lebanon.

A DEAR IN THE HEADLIGHTS

Charles Schumer's congressional district used to be the only



Norman Mailer:
All those *Ancient Evenings*

SMART WOMEN, FOOLISH CHOICES

Norman Mailer may get a lot more exposure than he bargained for if two tell-alls by his exes ever see the light of day. **Carole Mallory,** a former model and self-proclaimed sex addict, is shopping around a memoir of her nine-year relationship with the author, and sources say it's brimming with intimate details more graphic than even *we* want to know. Mallory, author of the steamy 1988 thriller *Flash,* says *A Woman's Story* is "a really, really honest" account of the liaison that began in 1983 when she met the then-married novelist at—of course—Elaine's. Mallory says she now "regrets" the relationship: "We came to a very sad end. [Mailer] was a mistake, a foolish choice," although she ventures, "I *would* welcome a book-jacket blurb from him." Meanwhile, Mailer's second wife, **Adele**—whom he famously stabbed at a party—is shopping around her own Mailer memoir, *The Last Party*. Says her agent, **Philippa Brophy,** of the dueling memoirs, "Adele's is a memoir of her life with him and a social history of the fifties and sixties. It should be *very* different from Mallory's."

Gwyneth Paltrow:
De-Kleining Calvin

one in the country with a majority of Jewish voters. That changed with the last redistricting, but you'd never know it from the cast of characters who are talking about running for his seat if Schumer opts to run for governor, as expected. Assembly members **Dov Hikind** and **Melinda Katz** and Councilmen **Anthony Weiner** and **Noach Dear** are among the names being tossed about. Last week, Dear held his most successful fund-raiser ever, raising almost $500,000 at a kosher catering house in Brooklyn. "It's a seat I've been looking at," confirms Dear. Schumer himself attended Dear's fund-raiser, along with Transportation secretary Federico Peña, Senator Joseph Lieberman, and Mayor Giuliani. As to his rich purse—"It's a miracle," Dear exults.

AL'S NEW GAL PAL; GWYN'S NEW GIG

FIRST BASE: Senator **Al D'Amato**—who didn't call **Claudia Cohen** on Valentine's Day—already has a new girl. She's **Kathryn Finley,** whose father, onetime owner of the Oakland A's, just died last month. D'Amato evidently met the toothsome redhead on a trip to Chicago, and has been escorting her around Washington these days. He took her to the Capital Grille last week, appropriately attired in a baseball cap.

PLAY BALL: Agitated Hamptons polo fans can relax: the season will go on—well *maybe*. In an unusual NIMBY scenario, neighbors of the Bridgehampton Polo Club are suing to derail the summer polo season, even though the Southampton town board voted to allow six matches. Rich entrepreneur **Neil Hirsch** says he and fellow club co-owner **Peter Brant** are "very excited" by the town's support. But **Judd Burstein,** the lawyer for the dissenting neighbors, demurs: "If I were a betting man, I would not be putting my money on these matches going forward."

A SUPER MESS: It isn't easy managing Manhattan apartment buildings. Brown Harris Stevens's **Michaele McCarthy** was meeting with a super, **Nicholas Hebra,** in a tony Upper East Side building recently, charged with the unpleasant task of firing him. Still, it came as a shock when the super pointed a .22-caliber rifle at her. "It was about eight inches from my forehead, and I'm looking down the barrel," recalls McCarthy, who had the presence of mind to push the barrel away from her face. When Hebra pulled the trigger, the bullet went into the ceiling. Hebra was charged with attempted murder, assault, and reckless endangerment; his attorney, Ken Schreiber, calls the incident "an unfortunate accident."

UNPALTRY PALTROW: Talk about too much of a good thing: **Gwyneth Paltrow's** got **Brad Pitt,** she's got a rising career in Hollywood, and she almost had Calvin Klein's new ad campaign. The deal was nearly sealed for her to do Calvin Klein's collection ads next week when she got a better offer. Instead, she's in Virginia, starring opposite **Jessica Lange** in TriStar's *Kilronan.*

Additional reporting by Maria Ricapito and Matthew Pincus.

SORRY, RIGHT NUMBER

Be careful the next time you give out the phone number of a well-known friend. *POPsmear,* a local do-it-yourself quarterly, has a number of celebrities up in arms over its practice of listing the home numbers of such heavy hitters as **Barry Diller, Barbara Walters,** and **Michael Eisner.** Apparently, some of the listed were so irked at the public airing of their digits that they fired off calls to NYNEX demanding an investigation. In response, the phone company sicced its security unit on the *POPsmear* editor, who goes simply by **James,** to find out where he was getting his information. When he refused to give up his sources, NYNEX threatened a thorough investigation into the matter. While neither confirming nor denying the incident, a company spokesman warns: "We have guidelines against our employees' providing this kind of information." Though *POPsmear* vows to keep publishing, its editor admits he's a little shaken by the threatening phone call. "I just wanted to get off the phone as soon as possible," says James with a sigh. "We're a small operation, and a lawsuit would only make us smaller."

POPsmear
Pop
Smear

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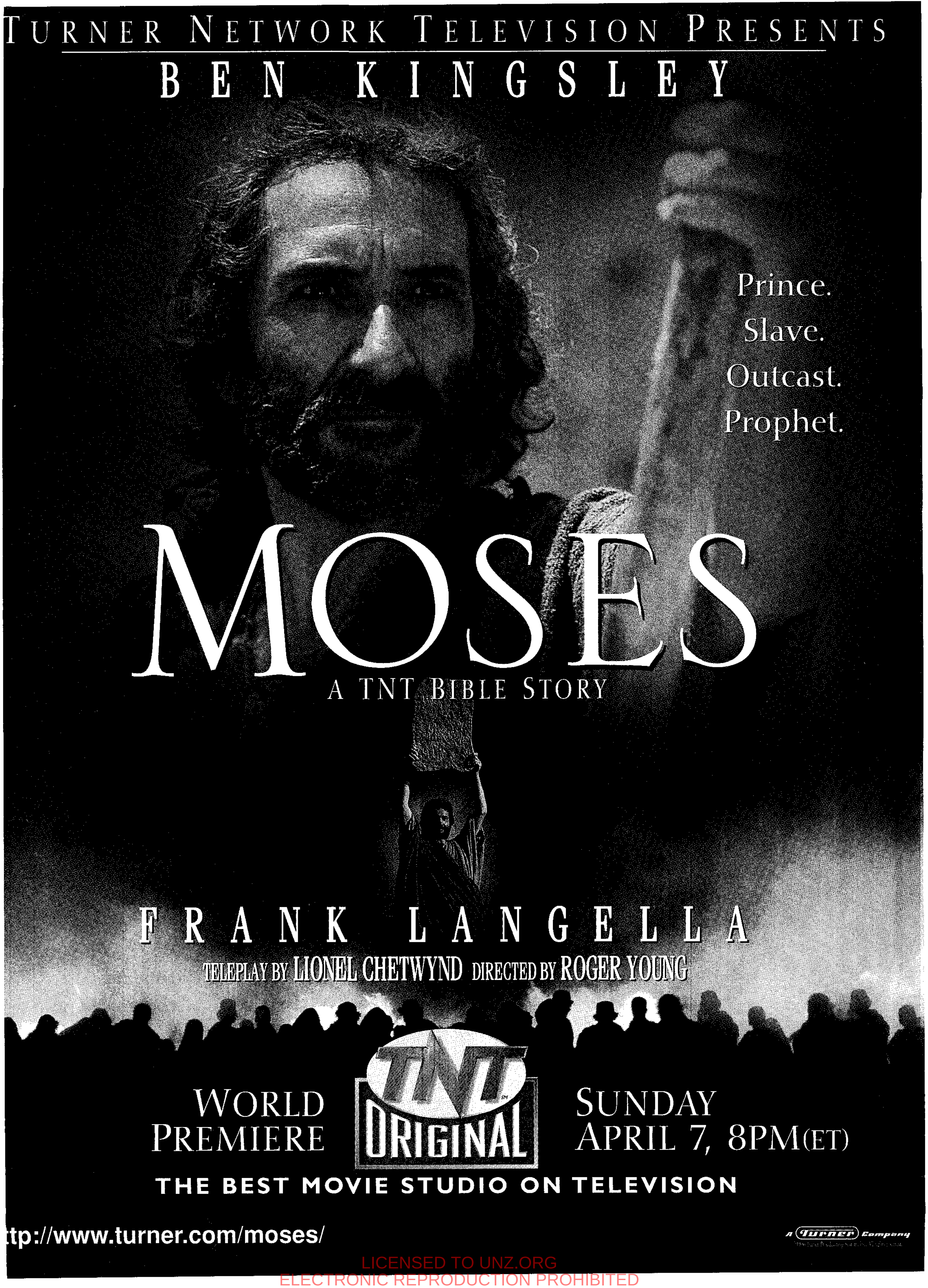
212-477-4502

Photographs: top to bottom, Frank Ockenfels 3/Outline; Barry King/Gamma-Liaison.



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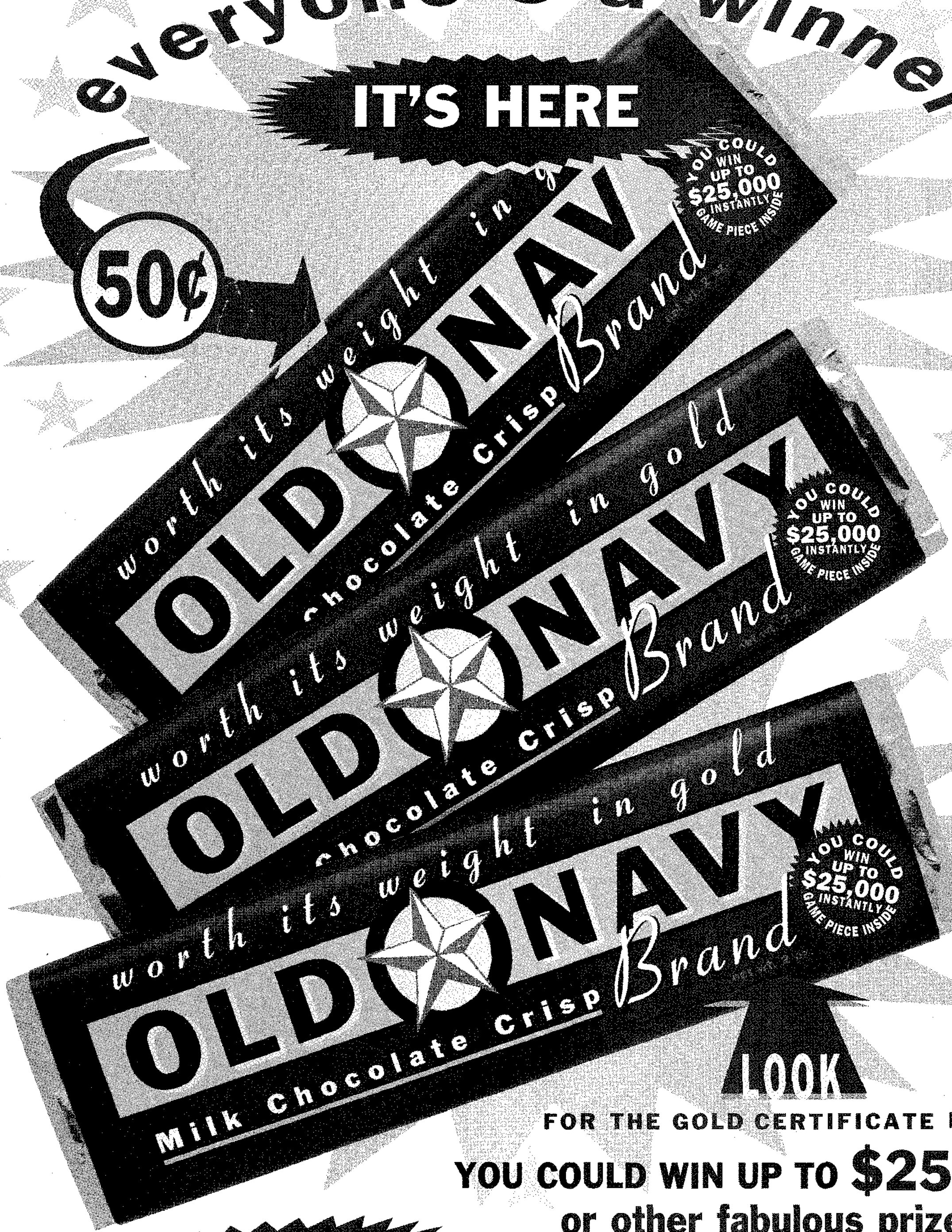
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GOTHAM

Imitation everywhere is said to be feared—*Thomas Adams*

THE FRONT PAGE

Thou Shalt Not Kill (Optional)

Religion is not supposed to have loopholes.

God's thoughts on killing are straightforward: four words, a simple declarative sentence, written in stone. Jesus, in his time, was known to break up the occasional impromptu execution. And while the Roman Catholic Church has slipped a bit during the odd crusade or inquisition, it has generally taken an increasingly hard line on killing, backdating the sanctity of human life to conception, and even continuing to frown on the intentional slaying of sperm.

So it was discombobulating to read, on the same day that Susan Sarandon won an Oscar for portraying an anti-death-penalty Catholic nun, that there had been a change in policy.

"A good Catholic can be for or against the death penalty," John Cardinal O'Connor told a congregation of police officers at St. Patrick's Cathedral. While the cardinal did emphasize that he personally would not execute anyone, he acknowledged that "formal official church teaching does not deny the right of the state to use the death penalty."

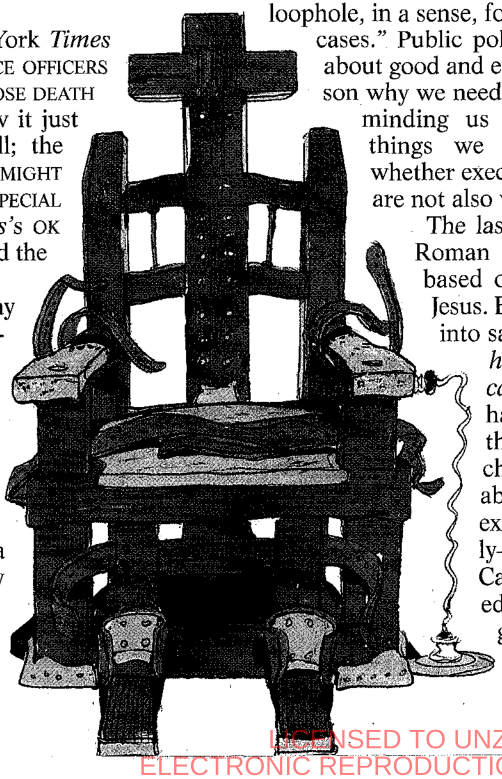
That the godless New York *Times* played the sermon as POLICE OFFICERS HEAR CARDINAL FIRMLY OPPOSE DEATH PENALTY demonstrated how it just doesn't get religion at all; the *Post*'s CARDINAL: CHURCH MIGHT OK CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN SPECIAL CASES and the *Daily News*'s OK TO BACK DEATH: O'C decoded the catechism exactly right.

That was certainly the way many Catholics took it. Improvising off the cardinal's remarks, William Bratton divined that in the case of the alleged killer of Officer Kevin Gillespie, "the death penalty would be very appropriate. No problem with it at all, and I'm a Catholic." The equally Catholic George Pataki, meanwhile, announced that he would begin to review all the capital cases in the state to ensure that whomever could be executed would be.

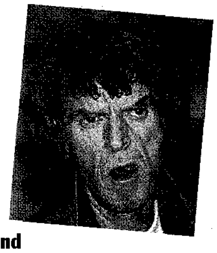
A generous interpretation of O'Connor's edict was that he wanted to provide moral guidance while respecting church-state boundaries. If so, he's softened a bit since 1990, when he not-so-elliptically decreed that Roman Catholic supporters of pro-choice politicians—politicians like, just as one example, Mario Cuomo—"must be warned that they are at risk of excommunication."

Although, truth be told, the cardinal was more correct then than he is now. Religion isn't meant to be morally ambiguous; it ought not, as one theologian struggled to explain this newish position on the death penalty, leave "a loophole, in a sense, for extremely heinous cases." Public policy can't always be about good and evil; all the more reason why we need religion to keep reminding us that some of the things we deem necessary—whether execution or abortion—are not also virtuous.

The last time we checked, Roman Catholicism was based on the teachings of Jesus. Back then he was big into saying things like *Let he who is without sin cast the first stone.* It hardly seems likely that he has since changed his mind about state-sponsored executions, particularly—as all good Catholics are reminded this week—after going through one.

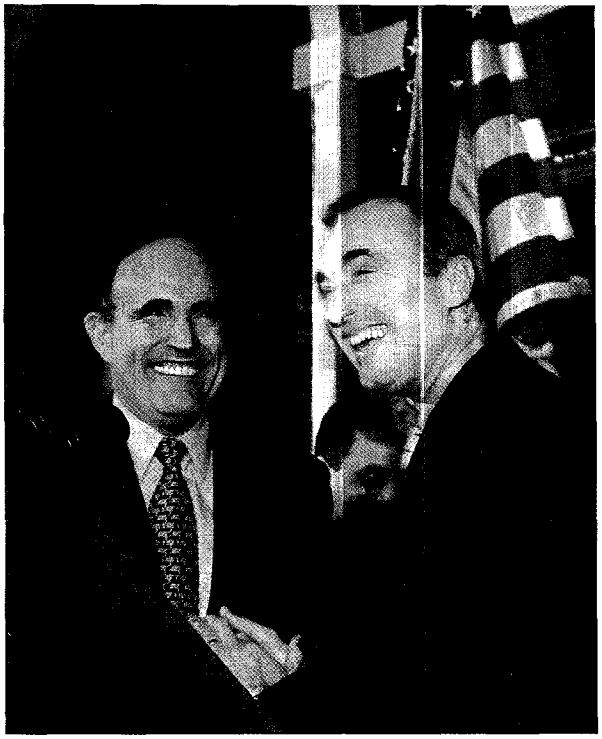


BAD SPIN "The funny thing is, on Friday morning, we only got maybe eight or ten calls about it from viewers and journalists. We also got a call from [White House press secretary] Mike McCurry asking us not to rerun it on Saturday, saying [the speech was] 'beyond the pale.' Then, at 1 P.M., [McCurry] announced to the White House press corps that he had asked us not to rerun it, and suddenly we had a media feeding frenzy."—Rich Fahle of C-SPAN media relations, on the widely reported re-airing of Don Imus's Radio and Television Correspondents Association dinner speech, in which he insulted the Clintons.



SNIPE OF THE WEEK "We haven't heard the last from Bratton. Giuliani has been trying to persuade the city to agree to have private security firms take over some city jails. What better way to convince the public if that private firm is First Security and the project is overseen by our old friend Bratton?" a state legislative aide who has been fighting Giuliani's efforts at privatization told *New York.*

HEAVY PETTING "The best of all possible worlds would be to, say, let them become companion animals. People have horses and they don't eat them, and they enjoy pasture, they enjoy their lives."—Dr. Elliot Katz, *president of In Defense of Animals,* on what should be done with the mad cows of England, rather than slaughtering them.



Rudy Giuliani and William Bratton, announcing Bratton's resignation.

Politics

EXIT, LIMPING

LET'S TAKE A MOMENT TO RECALL HOW William Bratton left his previous employer. A little over two years ago, he was giving up the police commissioner's job in Boston in order to come to New York and accept the position that he'll vacate two weeks from now, on April 15. His flirtation with then-mayor-elect Rudy Giuliani had been long and public, leaving Boston mayor Thomas Menino pathetically mute when the Boston press corps asked him about his commish's plans. Finally—relations between Bratton and Menino having soured in part because Bratton called the Boston job a good "consolation prize"—Menino got a late-night call from the commissioner, who said he was holding a press conference the next day with New York's mayor-elect. *Dum-da-dum-dum.*

Not a situation a mayor likes, and one, no doubt, Giuliani wanted to avoid this time around. And let's face it—given Bratton's history and opinion of himself, it's entirely possible Giuliani could have ended up somehow Meninoed here, or worse: Imagine the mayor reading about Bratton's departure in the bulldog *Times* one night at Gracie Mansion as Bratton, informed by a scurrying aide of Rudy's red-faced reaction, clucked away at his front table at Elaine's.

That's why Giuliani's statement on Sunday—that Bratton was "looking for an opportunity to enhance his career"—was shrewd politics, at least in the short term. It gave the commissioner little choice but to pull the mayor aside at an event last Monday and request what would be his final audience. By the time (presumably Monday night) he read the *Times*'s Tuesday editorial TIME TO MOVE ON—rarely does the *Times* take Giuliani's side, and so propitiously!—Bratton's hand was forced.

Former Dinkins press aide Leland Jones (starting work for Manhattan borough president Ruth Messinger this week) has seen his share of mayoral announcements get a negative spin in the next day's papers; he had to give Giuliani credit. "It's a lot like Houston versus N.C. State," Jones said, referring to the 1983 college-basketball final, when an unlikely last-moment North Carolina State basket sank the mighty Cougars. "Houston thought they had it till the last second, but then, lo and behold, no one was guarding the basket. All along Bratton was driving the press on this and controlling the pace at which he was going to leave. Then at the last minute, Giuliani turned around and said, 'Yeah, this is happening.' Bratton coached a brilliant game until the last fifteen seconds."

Bratton may have waited too long, played it too cute, and, with his $350,000 book deal and island weekend with Henry Kravis, given City Hall too much ammunition to take shots at him. Which is probably why the Tuesday-morning press conference at which Bratton announced his departure was so awash in mannered solicitude. The mayor can sometimes be gracious in victory, and Bratton had no choice but to be gracious in defeat, at least for twenty minutes in front of the cameras.

So there the two men stood, paying each other the highest compliments, but ritually, mechanically, without a hint of warmth or genuine affection. "Commissioner Bratton has an announcement to make," the mayor said simply at the podium. There was, later, a handshake, and maybe fifteen seconds' worth of smiles.

It was all contrived, but, it must be added, in an entirely predictable way. The only surprise came when Bratton grandly announced he'd accepted a "senior executive position" with a Boston corporation "handling mergers and acquisitions." Maybe it was just me, but it sure seemed as if Bratton was trying to make it sound like he was going into the *securities* business. Later, as it emerged that Bratton was going into the *security* business—that he's still going to be a cop, in other words, albeit a private one—and that his new salary would probably be not all that much more than his $133,000 commissioner's pay, his press-conference button-busting looked shameless, and kind of sad.

But if crime fighting suffers under Bratton's successor, Giuliani's victory last week might be short-lived. First Ramon Cortines, now Bratton—two dedicated public servants who did their jobs well, Bratton in particular, both forced to hit the road early.

Now we have Fire Department head Howard Safir as the next commissioner. Safir does have a law-enforcement background, but he's never been a cop and his chief qualification appears to be his loyalty to you-know-who. Indeed, it now looks like the mayor wants to run the Police Department out of City Hall. "I think it's absolutely bad government," says Ed Koch, "for the mayor to become the commissioner of any agency, whether it's the police or the [Human Resources Administration]. In fact, a mayor should be paying more attention to HRA. You hire a police commissioner, it's like hiring a general. Their expertise is a given." Giuliani, in other words, is putting his personal reputation and competence on the line now, with a major drug initiative in the works no less. And drug wars, says Citizens Crime Commission head Tom Reppetto, "often end up unsuccessful."

It was worth noting that the day after Bratton packed it in, Giuliani canceled two administration contracts with a social-service agency after some bad publicity. This, 27 months into the mayor's term, is Giuliani's first admission of having made a mistake.

MICHAEL TOMASKY

Television

FREUDIAN SHTICK

IT'S NOT EASY TO RAISE an eyebrow at Katz's, the venerable Lower East Side delicatessen; they've seen it all, they make a point of letting you know, from secret revolutionary societies to heads of state. But

Therapists waiting to audition at Katz's Delicatessen.

last Tuesday, during the busy lunch hour, the section in the back was attracting a good deal of puzzled attention. Within the velvet ropes (special for the occasion), 30 psychotherapists were milling about, grazing on pastrami and pickles like animals in some strange natural-habitat zoo exhibit. They had come from across the tri-state area at the invitation of Comedy Central, to audition for a role on its animated program *Dr. Katz: Professional Therapist*—the part of Dr. Katz's own professional therapist, to be specific. Some brought props, some brought briefcases. I brought my father, a psychiatrist from across the river. "They must have sent out 2,000 invitations," he said. "We're the only ones who were crazy enough to come."

"Oh, yeah," agreed Dr. Charles Goodstein, his friend and neighbor. "This is the *mishegoss* group."

Dr. Rachel Rosenbaum, of New York and Los Angeles, strode up and introduced herself. Dressed in a fitted brocade pantsuit, with dark glasses and painted nails, she hardly seemed to belong to the same species as her tweedy, balding colleagues. She took me aside and told me confidentially that she'd just come from her grandma Sylvia's funeral; I offered my condolences. Lowering the sunglasses, with a more conspiratorial tone, "I've just come from *Grandma Sylvia's Funeral*," she said. "I play a shrink. I do have a book; it's called *Get a Life—Yours*. Well, it's not a real book, but I pretend it's from HarperCollins." Despite the admission, it wasn't altogether clear that Dr. Rosenbaum understood the difference between fantasy therapist and real therapist, a concern that only grew deeper as she began passing out business cards.

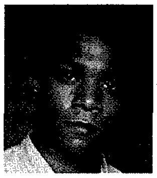
Jonathan Katz, also a comedian and not a real therapist, did not share her

ENTERTAINMENT

Requiescat in Spago

In 1969, a despondent writer—unknown and unpublished—killed himself. Unsurprisingly, his mother was convinced that the literary world had lost a great talent. She began waging a relentless campaign to make her dead son famous, and eleven years later, John Kennedy Toole's *A Confederacy of Dunces* won the Pulitzer Prize for Literature. This past February, *The Neon Bible*, a film adaptation of Toole's lesser-known, less spectacular novel, was released. While it's impossible to say whether Toole would've been as highly regarded had he stuck out the life thing, death eventually transformed him into a misunderstood, undervalued genius. But as far as today's jaded audiences are concerned, dying—no matter how artfully—is not enough. As in life, timing is everything.

MAUREEN CALLAHAN

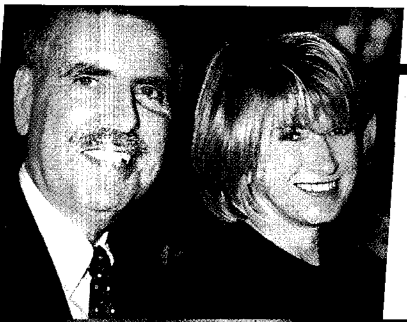
	Lifetime Achievement	Timing	Postmortem Success
	Jonathan Larson, composer In 1989, he was "nursing frustration and hurt . . . his futuristic rock musical, *Superbia*, . . . was too big, too negative; no producer was ready to take it on. Mr. Larson was getting fed up with waiting on tables at the Moondance Diner in SoHo."—New York *Times*, 3/17/96	Died at age 35, of an aortic aneurysm, two hours after a final dress rehearsal for *Rent*, the Off-Off Broadway, East Village rock musical he termed a "*Hair* for the 90's."	The *Times* (which interviewed Larson on the night of his demise) drools "exhilarating, landmark rock opera"; six-week run is extended and subsequently sells out; famous people spotted lining up outside theater; bidding war erupts over Broadway rights; now scheduled to open on April 29 at the Nederlander.
	Massimo Troisi, the Italian John Candy "The [*Il Postino*] filmmakers, expecting another of Troisi's lowbrow, critically panned comedies, never expected the movie to break out, [director] Radford says."—Los Angeles *Times*, 1/21/96	Impeccable. Not only does he suffer a massive coronary just twelve hours after shooting wraps, but the actor had deliberately delayed a desperately needed heart transplant to make this slight—albeit charming—love story.	Big deal made about Troisi's sitting in nearly every scene (e.g., "Look how sick he was!"); film grosses $13 million in Italy and $10 million in U.S.; American Film Institute hosts a tribute to Troisi. Miramax doubles $1.5 million marketing budget to court Oscar nods; receives five, including Troisi as Best Actor contender.
	John O'Brien, writer and alcoholic Kansas publishing house Watermark prints 2,000 copies of O'Brien's *Leaving Las Vegas* in 1991. "[It] was not Watermark's biggest seller. That distinction goes to *Cows Are Freaky When They Look at You*."—*Milwaukee Business Journal*, 1/13/96	Commits suicide several weeks after signing away the movie rights.	*Leaving Las Vegas*, starring Nicolas Cage and Elisabeth Shue, opens in October to huge critical acclaim; snags four Academy Award nominations; Nicolas Cage wins Best Actor and thanks O'Brien for inspiring him. Grove Atlantic buys two previously unpublished O'Brien novels, one completed by O'Brien's sister.
	**Jean-Michel Basquiat, artist** "There is nothing shockingly new about Basquiat . . . the last room displays the pathetic consequence [of drug addiction], the work veering from the vacuous to the directionless."—Review of exhibit, London *Sunday Telegraph*, 3/24/96	Bolsters street cred by OD'ing on heroin in 1988 at height of a career criticized as being driven by hype.	Four years later, is the subject of major retrospective at the Whitney; Madonna co-sponsors current show at the Serpentine Gallery in London; obnoxious peer Julian Schnabel recruits David Bowie, Dennis Hopper, and Gary Oldman to star in his Basquiat biopic, *Build a Fort, Set It on Fire*, to be released this summer by Miramax.
	For Squirrels, recording artists "The buzz on these current college darlings has been twofold—from the hit 'Mighty K.C.,' a dramatic, appropriately dark tribute to Kurt Cobain, and from the publicity stemming from the car crash last fall"—Dayton *Daily News*, 3/22/96	Tiny tour van overturns as band heads home from triumphant gig at CBGB, where it had just been presented with its freshly pressed CD; singer Jack Vigliatura (bottom left) and bassist Bill White (top right) killed, along with manager. Guitarist and drummer crawl away from wreckage.	Surviving members recruit new bassist and shoot video rife with footage of dead members; makes MTV's playlist, though they publicly bemoan the decision to cut tributary text tacked onto end of video; debut record, *Example*, breaks *Billboard* Top 200; band announces plans to tour—"This time, we're traveling in a bus."

Photographs: top to bottom, Matthew O'Grady; Mario Tursi/Sygma; no credit; Richard Schulman/Gamma-Liaison; AP/Wide World.

Martha And You

At the '21' Club, where Martha Stewart hosts a cocktail reception for Literacy Partners.

By Ariel Kaminer
Photographed by Patrick McMullan

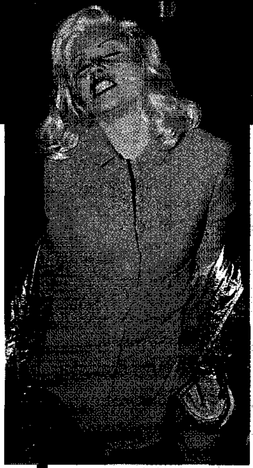


Top, Martha Stewart and Gerald Levin at '21' for the Literacy Partners party. Above, Norman Pearlstine and wife Nancy Friday at Elaine's for *Entertainment Weekly*'s Oscars party.

IF IT SEEMS TO YOU—AFTER SEEING HER TV show, reading her magazine, following her books, aspiring to her standards—that being Martha Stewart is a stressful job, maybe that's because you're not Martha Stewart. America's most famous hostess no longer has to spend hard days in the kitchen, trussing quails and arranging cut grasses, just to produce an elegant affair. These days, as was the case at the party she hosted for the Literacy Partners, she can pretty much just show up.

For those of you trying this at home, here's how it's done. Invite your friends: movie stars, media moguls, publishing executives. Suggest a conversational topic, such as literacy ("It's perfectly sweet of her," someone said when Arnold Scaasi mentioned the library in India Stewart had quietly funded). Serve some food: rough-hewn baskets of crudités, millions of tiny hors d'oeuvre, and a heavy silver platter of exotic fruits. "In Puerto Rico, they call it a sweet apple," she explained, as if on-camera. "They can be red or green. They're delicious, milder than a soursop, but they won't make good ice cream."

If mistakes are made along the way—as when waiters serving the '21' signature steak tartare raised the eyebrows of a few beef-wary Anglophobes and a strictly vegetarian Mary Tyler Moore—be gracious. Take them in stride. Those around you are probably antsy enough already. "Why should the staff be nervous?" she scoffed. "I'm one of them."



At the 7th on Sixth Versus show: Woody Allen, Soon-Yi Previn, and Gianni and Donatella Versace (top), and Deborah Harry (above). Above right, Jessye Norman and Robert Goulet at *Entertainment Weekly*'s Oscars party. Right, *Elle* and *Mirabella*'s Amy Gross, Amy Hempel, and A. M. Homes celebrate the publication of Homes's *The End of Alice*.

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sense of self-confidence. "I feel so phony all of a sudden," he said, addressing the group from the couch and chair that had been arranged to suggest a doctor's office. "For the contestants—I'm not judging you." It was a little joke, he had to explain.

Dr. Fran Levin of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, led the pack of cartoon applicants with the story of the wallet made of human foreskin; rub it and it turns into a briefcase. ("That was about erectile tissue, I think," said Katz, exhorting everyone to enjoy lunch.) That set the tone for an afternoon regrettably low on sexual repression: Almost all the therapists did routines involving genital mutilation, incestuous relations, and polymorphous perversity. ("It's the same area that most comics work in," Katz said. "I guess I expected a little more insight from them.")

There were also Jewish characters, Austrian accents, and what one could perhaps call profession-specific humor. "I'm not Heidi Fleiss," Dr. Dennis Leone began a nomenclature riff. "I don't see *clients.* I see *patients,*" he ranted. "Hey, I'm on your side here," Katz said, a little frightened.

The foray into the spotlight seemed to be having a profound mood-altering effect on these otherwise reserved practitioners. A Brazilian psychologist who wandered in while sightseeing commented, "We never see this in the Brazilian therapy."

If anyone begrudged these starry-eyed therapists a moment of glory, though, it was not Dr. Joyce Brothers, who took the stage in a wash of pink. The crowd fell silent—long enough to hear a few terrible jokes. "Ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one: Bo Derek getting older."

Material like that gets you only so far with a seasoned bunch of post-Freudians, most of whom were now attending to their brisket sandwiches. Eventually, Katz managed to coax Dr. Brothers off the stage, and the real excitement began. It was my father's turn.

"Beloved friends, parents, worthy rabbi," he began, in his best bar mitzvah–boy preamble, explaining his discomfort over his audition. "For what? To be a cartoon character. I'm not sure that for me that represents a personal advance." He was a big hit, both with the audience of his peers and with the emcee, who referred to him as "a bald Dr. Joyce Brothers." I felt confident that the day was his.

Alas, however, it was not to be. The winner was announced: some guy named Harvey Greenberg.

ARIEL KAMINER

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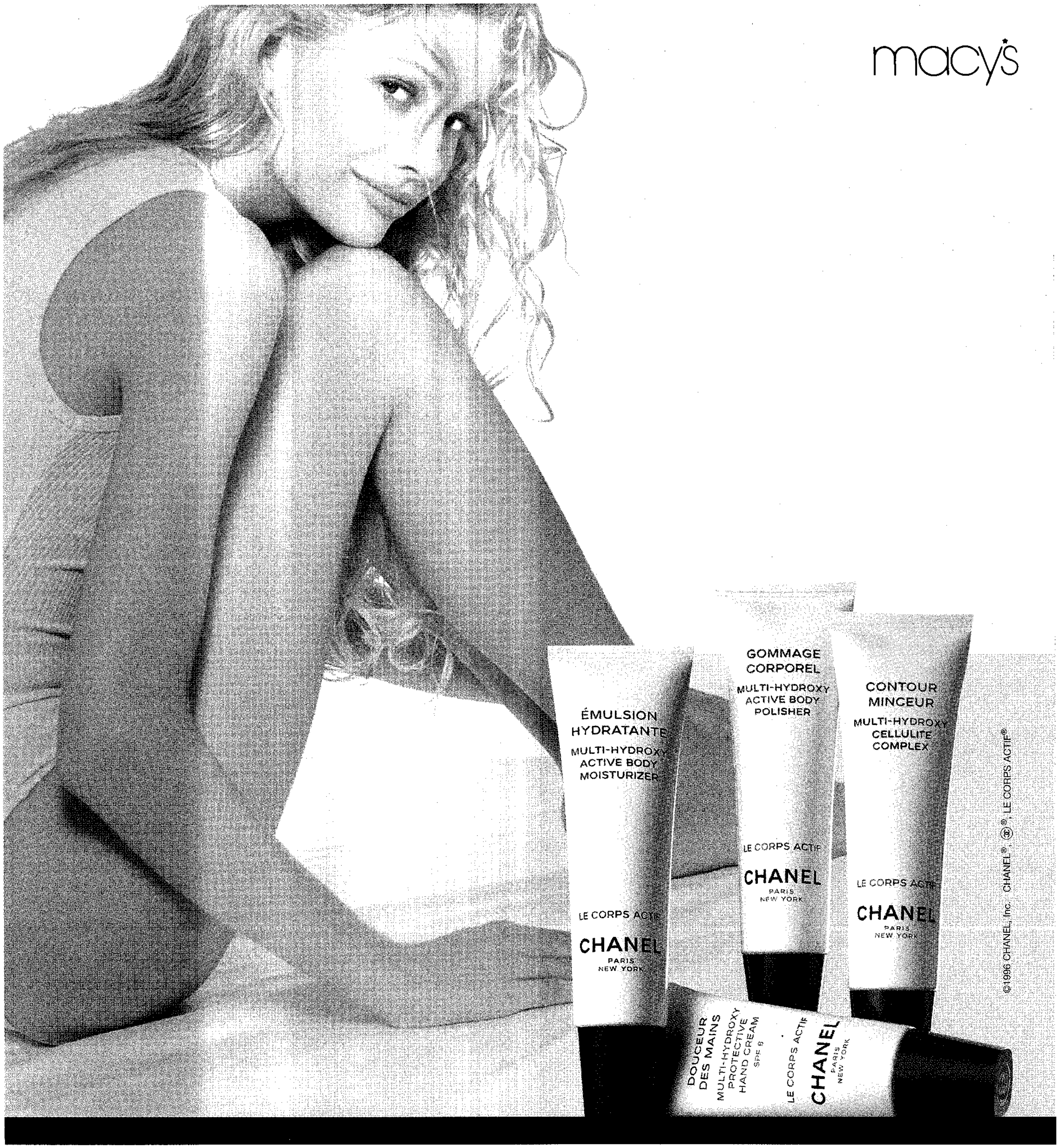
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THE NATIONAL INTEREST JACOB WEISBERG

The Third Man

Ross Perot is back, in all his self-aggrandizing, wacky splendor. Once again, he says he'll run only if America insists. Yeah, right.

Ross Perot is fond of movie references. At a speech in Philadelphia last week, he praised Kirk Douglas, mentioned *E.T.*, *Field of Dreams*, *Dragnet*, and *Forrest Gump* (twice). He also sang "There's No Business Like Show Business." But the film I kept remembering was *Groundhog Day*, in which Bill Murray is forced to endure the same events over and over again. It makes little sense for Perot to repeat his run for president; he cannot win, and is almost certain to get fewer votes than he did in 1992. He seems determined nonetheless, farce destined to repeat itself as farce.

This time, however, it will not be a simple matter of Perot laying his $60 million on the barrel and demanding a seat at the debates. To satisfy his self-aggrandizing conception of dramatic structure, he must go through an elaborate self-courting ritual. Officially, like last time, Perot is reluctant to run. "My dream is to go back to work," he says. "I don't enjoy this." But: "I can't just sit here and watch everything deteriorate." We have a genuine Cincinnatus figure this year, Colin Powell, who declined to leave his plow. Perot, by contrast, is Cincinnatus as uninvited guest.

The actual content of Perotism does not seem to have changed. Perot the useful centrist and Perot the Napoleonic nut job remain inextricably bound together. One minute Perot is making an important point about the unwillingness of the major parties to deal with the Social Security time bomb. The next he is off on a jag about how the Contract With America was actually his idea, or how he would have gotten 40 percent of the vote in 1992 "if the American people had voted their consciences" (whatever that means). My favorite bit of new lunacy is Perot's conviction that he didn't actually drop out in 1992. "I am sick and tired of the myth that I left the race, because I never stopped getting petitions signed," he told Larry King, astonishingly.

Almost as bizarre as Perot are the Perotians. In the wake of the Buchanan boomlet, one has certain expectations for anti-Establishment movements. One assumes outsiders will be angry. But where the Buchananites do seem like "peasants with pitchforks," truly marginalized and disaffected, the Perot people seem more like managers with mortgages, anxious about an uncertain future rather than a miserable present. They seem foggy about what the problem is and what they want to do about it. Where the Buchananites savor the red conspiracy meat that their candidate throws out to them, the Perotians are not much drawn into their man's genuinely paranoid orbit.

In justifying his potential candidacy, Perot seems torn between two basic arguments. The first is that the country is broken and that only he can fix it. The second is that he deserves credit for having fixed it already. On the one hand, government shutdowns and continuing resolutions show that Washington is worse than ever. On the other, it's thanks to him that Congress passed a gift ban and lobbying-disclosure requirements and that it almost passed a balanced budget. Lawyers call this arguing in the alternative—Perot's first alternative underscores the need for him to run again. The second gives him a way to claim victory even if he doesn't run.

Given all the trouble and expense he is going to, the latter course seems unlikely. Perot has caused United We Stand America, an "educational" foundation, to molt into the Reform Party, which can better serve as an election vehicle. Thanks to its petition drive, Perot is already on the November ballot in seven states, including California, and will probably succeed in all or nearly all.

Technically, Perot is merely using his name, and that of this year's Admiral Stockdale, "computer consultant" Carl Owenby Jr. of Florida, to hold a place for whomever the Reform Party nominates at its Labor Day convention. And it is possible that the candidate will be someone other than Perot—though Perot would be allowed to give only $1,000 to that person. What is impossible is for it to be someone Perot has not handpicked. Perot's notion of democracy is everyone agreeing with him. It's telling that his complaint about Washington is that people "bicker and fight" instead of running the government like a business. In business, there is no need for lengthy deliberation, compromise, or majority rule.

Perot is especially sensitive to the charge that he would re-elect Clinton, comparing it on *Larry King Live* to the propaganda of Lenin and Goebbels (Did Lenin really say, as Perot claims he did, "Tell the people what they want to hear"?). Perot dislikes Clinton intensely, calling him a "weather vane in the White House." Perot also claims that he draws equal-

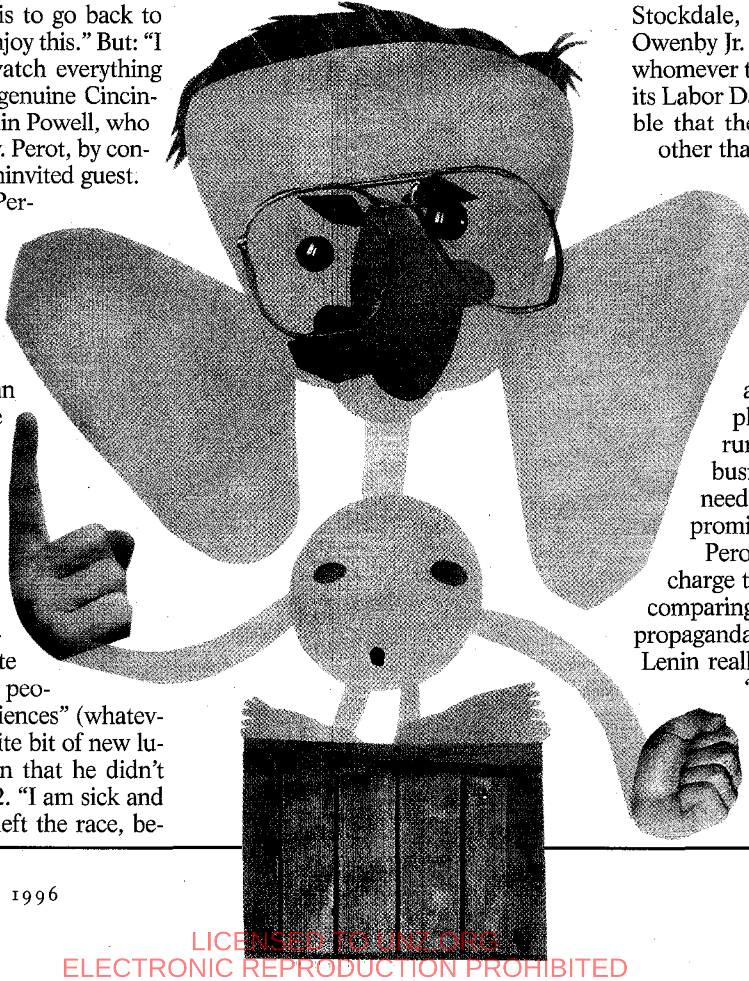

Illustration by Stephen Kroninger.

ly from both parties. Evidently, the parties do not think so. Dole and Republican National Chairman Haley Barbour are trying to calm him—*nice doggie, Ross.* To the GOP, Perot is the Qaddafi of American politics, a madman with a swing vote; to Clintonites, he is an ace in the hole. Perot voters went overwhelmingly for Republicans in the 1994 election; it is very hard to imagine a scenario in which Perot takes more votes from the Democrats than Republicans in 1996. "The only thing Perot ought to run for is a psychiatrist's office," James Carville said recently, offering a bit of provocation.

Evidence continues to mount that Perot is not just crazy in the colloquial sense. A friend of mine who suffers from manic-depression is convinced that Perot is afflicted with the same illness, in its untreated form. Both his superhuman feats, like setting sales records at IBM, and his grandiosity would be consistent with this condition. At Texas A&M, where he spoke last week, one student asked a mildly provocative question about why he should be taken at his word. His motive, Perot replied testily, was "to see you all have the same opportunities my generation had or better. But if I won't do it, and if I get turned off," he added, "that guarantees that we will fail." A related syndrome is a persecution complex and paranoia. "I'll probably be cut to pieces by the time we create the party," he says darkly. He has never backed up his assertions that Vietnamese agents were sent to kill him in Texas, or that George Bush tried to ruin his daughter's wedding. More recently, Perot told the Washington *Post* that one of the parties asked him for a million dollars to underwrite a dirty-tricks campaign in 1993. If this is based on anything other than his imagination, it might well involve a violation of federal election law. Perot, however, has refused to provide details.

Barring a prescription for lithium, we can expect to be put through it once more. Despite his eccentricities, Perot was a positive factor last time around. He nudged forward the notion of the virtue and necessity of telling hard truths. His charts and infomercials spurred both parties to begin to address the deficit and political reform. This time, he won't be so helpful. Perot squandered his remaining credibility by sitting out the budget battle. Instead of urging a settlement, he saw that his personal advantage lay in the biggest Washington train wreck possible. Perot is not so hard to understand. Stalemate and gridlock mean opportunity for him. Measured progress undermines him. When he says "It's not about me," read: It's all about me. ▬

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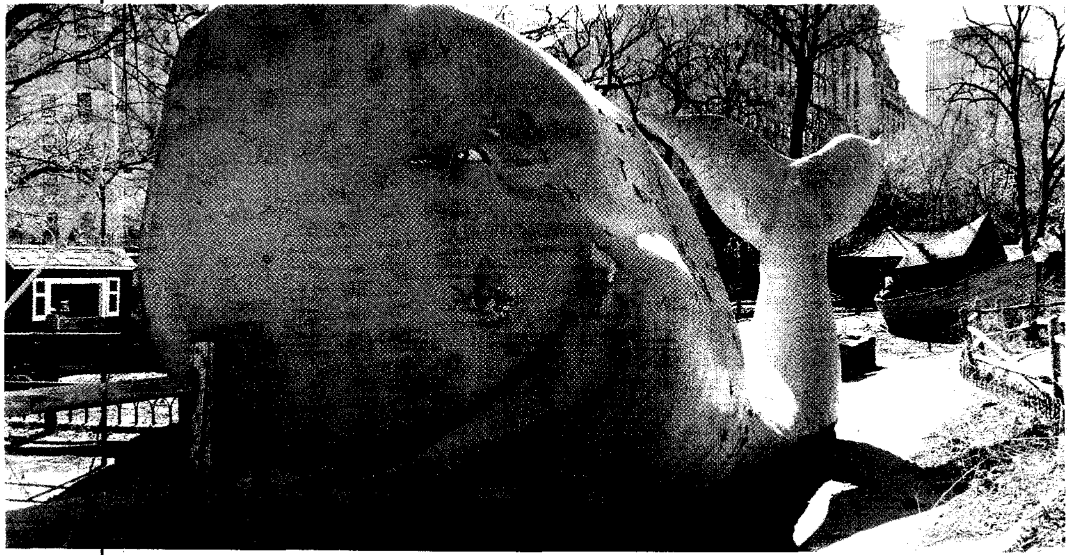
CITYSCAPE KARRIE JACOBS

New Zoo Review

Whose nostalgia is it, anyway? In the battle over Central Park's cute, kitschy Children's Zoo, the choice is between faux *1961 and* faux *nature.*

IF A BALKAN-STYLE CONFLICT HAD erupted in Mother Goose Land, the villages abandoned by fleeing lambkins, bunnies, and ducklings might resemble the Central Park Children's Zoo. Opened in 1961 and, after years of neglect, shut down in 1992, this fairy-tale town has deteriorated into a candy-colored slum.

The glass walls of the zoo's entry pavilion are now covered with plywood, and sheets of powder-blue paint peel from its vaulted ceiling. The zoo's centerpiece was a blue fiberglass whale that once had a tank of live tropical fish—and more recently, fake fish—where its tonsils would be. Now the whale has a dented head, its upper jaw rests on a guardrail, and its pink mouth is full of nothing but graffiti. The rabbit clad in bow tie and natty jacket who formerly stood upright beside a slide shaped like a hollow log appears to have been brutally hacked in two. At the Little Pigs' compound, only one house remains of the original three. (Naturally, it's the one made from brick.)



Once upon a time, this whale was the Central Park Children's Zoo aquarium.

Photograph by Steffen Thalemann.

In a way, this tiny town is suddenly a war zone, a strategic beachhead in the cultural conflict between the Wildlife Conservation Society, the operator of all the city's zoos, and a group of preservationists rallied by Friends of the Upper East Side Historic Districts. It is a clash between proponents of the new-style children's zoo, in which the need to entertain is concealed behind a look that speaks the language of environmentalists, and fans of the old approach, in which the animals were shoehorned into a nursery-rhyme vision of childhood. What this dispute underscores is how much zoos have changed in the 35 years since Robert Moses, in one of his last acts as parks commissioner, had architect Aymar Embury II and his son Edward Coe Embury design the Central Park Children's Zoo.

The plan for the new zoo, developed by the WCS in cooperation with landscape architects Quennell Rothschild Associates and Cabrera/Barricklo Architects, replaces the unabashedly man-made pavilion with ersatz nature, an archway through the trunk of a towering fiberglass oak tree. The "Enchanted Forest" includes a glass-enclosed salamander pond; diminutive breeds of cows, goats, and pigs for petting; and giant fish heads that allow kids to view the world through fish-eye lenses.

The Friends of the Upper East Side, to generate interest in *their* cause, mounted a small exhibition, decorating the walls of their East 69th Street office with photographs of the Children's Zoo in its prime—full of healthy barnyard animals and immaculate preschoolers. The exhibit clearly placed the zoo in its historical moment, ammunition for the preservationists. But the photographs also recall another era—one in which little girls wore starched party dresses, anklets, and patent-leather shoes. The old photos only serve to anchor the zoo more firmly in the past.

Friends president Anne Millard, vice-president Teri Slater, and landscape architect Michael Gotkin have spent the past few weeks lobbying meetings of all the community boards representing neighborhoods bordering the park, offering a counterpoint to the WCS's presentations. They scored a propaganda coup when architect Robert A. M. Stern posed for a New York *Times* photographer in front of the dilapidated Noah's ark and declared the zoo's architectural significance. The Friends complain that the WCS doesn't appreciate the inherent sweetness of the old zoo, that the wildlife society has no patience for fairy tales. Millard labels the new zoo "a very unchildlike concept."

"We're taking a Bob Venturi position," says Gotkin. (Venturi is famous for arguing, persuasively, that both Las Vegas and kitsch such as the former Long Island poultry store built in the shape of a duck have architectural merit.) "It's one of the last surviving children's zoos in this country," he adds, meaning it's one of the last of its specific type.

The Friends insist that it will take only $1.2 million to restore the zoo. An entirely new zoo would cost up to $6 million to build, the bulk of which has been promised by an anonymous donor. Lovingly returned to mint condition, however, it wouldn't be a state-of-the-art zoo but rather a historic artifact, a working model of an archaic form.

My initial response to the Friends' position was entirely sympathetic, not because I believe in the zoo's architectural "merit" but because I'm a sucker for the aesthetic, preferring the naïvely idiosyncratic to the functional and bland. I was outraged in the mid-eighties when Tropicana dumped the hula girl from its packaging in favor of an orange glistening with juice. Walking around the 1961 zoo, I am charmed by the aluminum lamps shaped like daffodils and tulips and the whimsical wire sculpture of a bird eating a worm that tops one of the cages.

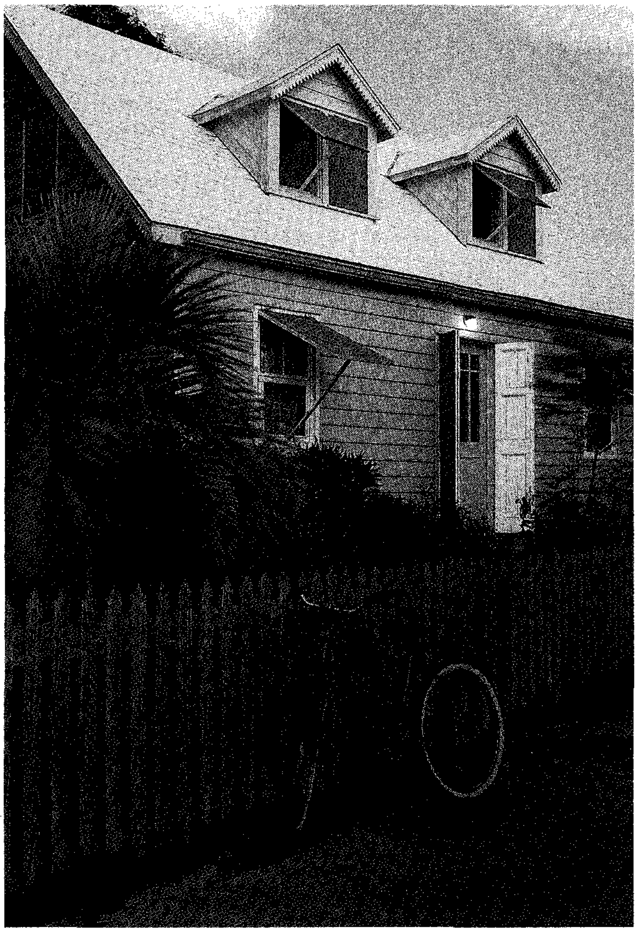
On looks alone, I'd choose the old zoo over the new one. But this debate is a complicated one. It isn't just a matter of tutti-frutti versus earth tones. New zoos are completely different from old zoos. The old model was built purely for human entertainment, a dreamy cornball folly. Now the architecture of zoos, refuges of last resort for endangered species, is largely invisible. Artificial rocks, ledges, and trees; natural vegetation; and strategic use of glass give animals both physical and psychological space and permit visitors to watch creatures in action instead of listless cage potatoes. To today's zookeepers and designers, the fiberglass whale, with its impossible-to-maintain fish tank, and the giant wedge of cheese in which the resident mice allegedly died untimely deaths are an embarrassment—the wildlife equivalent of sweatshops.

"In a storybook atmosphere, the environment is the fun part, and the animals become accoutrements," says Christine Seifert, curator of education at the Dallas Zoo and an expert on contemporary children's zoos whose views have been cited by the WCS. "The goal of most children's zoos around the country—the goal of zoos, period—is to help people who have an increasingly distant relationship with real nature experience some connection with animals."

These days, we are so awash in fantasy that it falls upon zoos to ground children in reality. When the Central Park Children's Zoo was built, it was a bright spot in a world where Captain Kangaroo and Shari Lewis existed, but mostly in black and white. There was no Nickelodeon, no Sonic the Hedgehog, no Warner Bros. Studio Store, no Discovery Zones or birthday parties at Dezerland or Jekyll & Hyde.

Brooklyn's Prospect Park Wildlife Center, which was overhauled and reopened in 1993, contains some of the features that are planned for Central Park's Enchanted Forest. The ground is covered with soft brown mulch. Netting overhead keeps exotic birds in—but somehow fails to keep the local Brooklyn sparrows out—and kids are invited to play make-believe: "Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be a turtle?" asks a sign decorated with true-to-life animal illustrations—no cartoons here. Kids crawl inside large shells mounted on short poles to have a turtle experience. A prairie-dog town is built on a hollow hill. Kids can run into the space beneath the hill and pop their heads up into clear Plexiglas domes to see the world from a prairie-dog point of view. The old-style zoo tried to make animals intelligible to children by anthropomorphizing, giving them little houses and bow ties. The new zoo teaches empathy by asking kids to experience the world through the eyes of the animal.

When new, the 1961 Children's Zoo possessed the cheerful beauty of Disney films. But it's a look we can't re-create without irony. As lovely as it is—or was—the old version is no longer particularly useful as a zoo. Even its architectural significance is arguable. Aymar Embury's work is probably best represented by the buildings he designed for the Prospect Park Zoo in the thirties, which are well preserved; the fairy-tale elements in Central Park weren't exactly original, adopted from children's zoos built in the early forties. The desire to hold on to something that was once wonderful is understandable, but Central Park isn't a museum. In this case, the public benefit of a new, well-made children's zoo outweighs the need to shield cherished corners of the city from the passing of time. ▬



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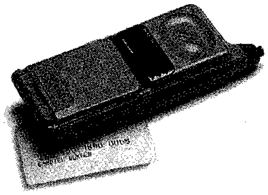

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THE BIG PICTURE WILLIAM GOLDMAN

Stay Angry

Aside from some moving moments (Kirk, Christopher) and amusing interludes (Sharon, Emma) the Oscars were as infuriating as Hollywood itself.

Left to right: Vanessa Williams; Whoopi Goldberg; Emma Thompson; Sharon Stone and Quincy Jones. Next page, Christopher Reeve.

WHEN THIS CENTURY'S CULTURE is put in the time capsule, what are the locks? Something by Hopper, absolutely. *The Prodigal Son* by Balanchine, a must. No question about *Porgy and Bess*. Radio: Orson's vision of the Martians invading. For movies, obviously, *Gunga Din*.

What about television, though? Eggheads might go for Joe Welch at last bringing down McCarthy. Dramaturges could head toward *Marty*. But I'm sorry, nothing, *nothing* displays America's sheer greatness of soul as much as the Academy Awards.

As I worked myself into shape for this year's version, I think I was most grateful to the Academy for *not* nominating Ron Howard for Best Director. All he did was bring home one of the two or three best-reviewed *and* most commercial films eligible. You think it was *easy* having those three schmucks sardined in a capsule for two hours with nothing particularly interesting to talk about and still make us care? Let Oliver Stone try it—and he's won *twice* for Best Director.

The reason I bless the Academy for snubbing Ron Howard should be clear: *We now have something new to bitch about.* Charlie Chaplin never won a competitive acting award? Garbo was ignored? Cary Grant got stiffed? Personally, I wouldn't have it any other way. The fellow getting the most mileage out of injustice these days is Martin Scorsese, who lamented in a recent interview in this magazine that he felt underappreciated Out There. Personally, I don't think the very talented Scorsese even runs a close second to Stanley Kubrick. No director on my watch has been as hosed—*Dr. Strangelove* loses to *My Fair Lady*, *2001* loses to *Oliver!*, *A Clockwork Orange* loses to *The French Connection.* Yesss.

For me, Kubrick is the greatest working American director. And I hope he *never* wins. I don't want to give up my rage, don't you see? I want the Academy to continue its perfect, goofy ways. I want to continue to be baffled and dazed, heart-warmed and -broken.

Forever.

Now to this year's edition. Since you have either (a) gotten sick of it or (b) forgotten it by now, I promise to take less time than any of the five nominated songs.

1. Quincy Jones. Drag him back if need be.

2. Whoopi. Somehow she managed to seem both funny and, on occasion, wise as she tugged the festivities along. And whoever wrote her opening ribbon riff should get kisses on both cheeks.

3. Vanessa Williams. How do you sing like that *and* look like that and *not* be a Hollywood star? I would put her in a lot of movies and make a lot of money.

4. Sharon Stone. Her "All right, let's all have a psychic moment" was the ad-lib of the night. (The envelope had been misplaced.) How do you make a joke like that *and* look like that and not be a comedy star? I would make her stop killing people and put her in a lot of comedies and make a lot of money.

5. Christopher Reeve. Shocking and of course moving, and suddenly I was in London, maybe a dozen years ago, where he was doing a play on the West End. *The Princess Bride*, which I wrote, had come alive, and he was interested in talking about playing Westley, the hero, so we met and spent a little time together.

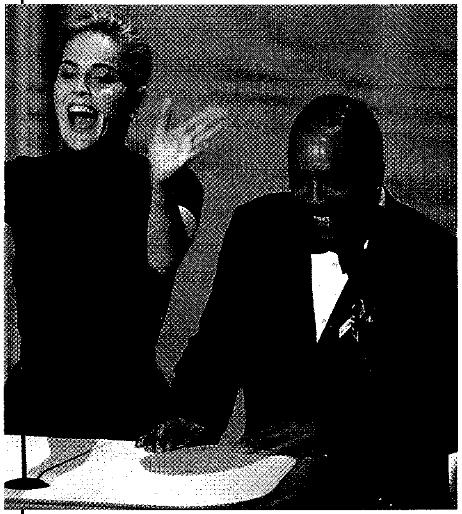
And I remember thinking what an unusual young man he was. For a star, first of all, he was a serious actor. And he was also seriously tall. (Most stars tend to be *waaaaaay* smaller than you imagine—which is why they all wear boots, and why they wear them all the time.) And Reeve was polite. And book-intelligent. And there was about him an undeniable decency. And watching him in his imprisoning chair Monday evening, I thought, *There are so many horrible human beings who lucked into being movie stars—why did God have to select one of the fine ones?*

6. Emma Thompson. The major acceptance speech of the night. She embraced Tony Hopkins, her presenter, and she started to speak, all trembly and

Photographs by AP/Wide World Photos.

moved. “Before I came,” she said. “I went to visit Jane Austen's grave . . . in Winchester Cathedral . . .” At this point, *groans* had begun all across America. And at *this* point, her timing blissful, Miss Thompson knocked us all for six by adding: “to pay my respects, you know . . . and tell her about the grosses.”

Maybe there's something to be said for a Cambridge education after all.



7. Kirk Douglas. I wonder what any young viewers still awake must have thought. Because Douglas was never thought of as being a great “actor” and was not really even a giant box-office star, like John Wayne.

But Christ, did he have power. And watching him all but *run* from the wings at 79, still tough and sassy, still ready to fight any man in the house—well, I've always been a huge admirer of Douglas's, but never more than when I watched him take the stage last Monday.

8. Meryl Streep. The shock on her face when *Braveheart* won Best Picture summed up the night for me. Because of course it was a surprise, on an evening of surprises—and maybe the biggest surprise was just how swell the show was. Funny, sometimes, and sad—that too. It had everything—*except quality films from major Hollywood studios.*

There were quality films, all right. From Australia and England and Italy—and from the lesser American distribution companies. But almost none of the majors.

The big studios have gone into the junk business now.

It wasn't always like this. Out of curiosity, I looked to see who won in 1946. Understand something: This was *not* considered a great year back then. Not like '41, which had *Citizen Kane* and *The Maltese Falcon* (neither of which won Best Picture). Or 1940, which had *The Philadelphia Story* and *The Great Dictator* and *The Grapes of Wrath* (none of which won Best Picture). Or 1939, which had *The Wizard of Oz* and *Stagecoach* and *Wuthering Heights* and *Of Mice and Men* and *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* and *Ninotchka* and *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and *Gunga Din* (none of which even came *close* to winning Best Picture, because it was the year of *Gone With the Wind*).

No, 1946 was just this sunny happy year, the first Oscars after the war ended. Still, it brought us *Notorious* and *My Darling Clementine* and *The Big Sleep* and *Gilda* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice* and *The Killers* and *The Stranger* (none of which, by the by, even got *nominated*).

But *The Yearling* did. As did *The Razor's Edge.* And *Henry V.* Not to mention *It's a Wonderful Life.* And the eventual winner, *The Best Years of Our Lives.*

We are on a slippery slope, folks, and if the major studios feel the least bit ashamed, well, why shouldn't they—whose fault is it? And if you think I'm being too negative, try this nightmare thought: What if this past year, this *annus horribilis,* turns out to be the *best* of the rest of this century?

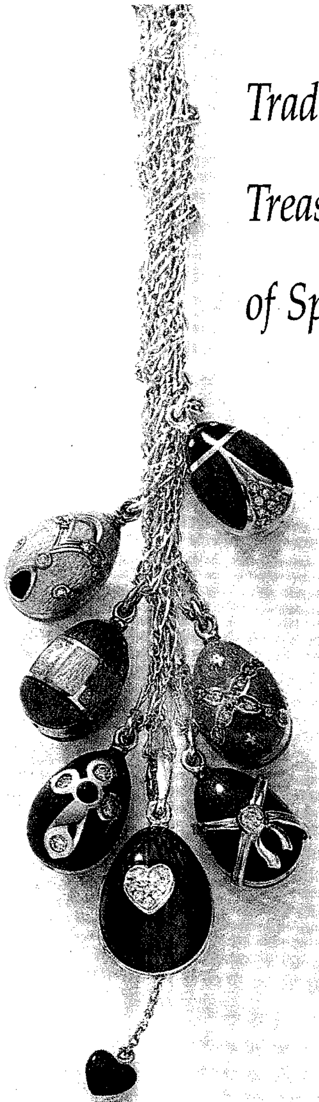
Three final hopes and prayers.

1. Now that Michael Ovitz has left the agency business, the media are hustling to find a replacement (an ex-model with William Morris is an early contender). Please tattoo this inside your eyelids: *Agents do not matter.* They never have. They never will. Talent matters. Agents just live longer.

2. Can we please have a moratorium on awarding drunks, hookers, and the intellectually challenged? These are the easiest parts in the world to play and require the least acting skill.

3. Most fervently, can the Academy stop milquetoasting and *please let us know the actual vote tallies?* Not during the show but right afterward. Can you imagine our anger, our shock, our interest, our joy? We would—and I mean this—talk of nothing else but movies around the water cooler for days.

Which is, after all, what Hollywood wants us to do anyway. ■



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CITYSIDE JOHN CONNOLLY

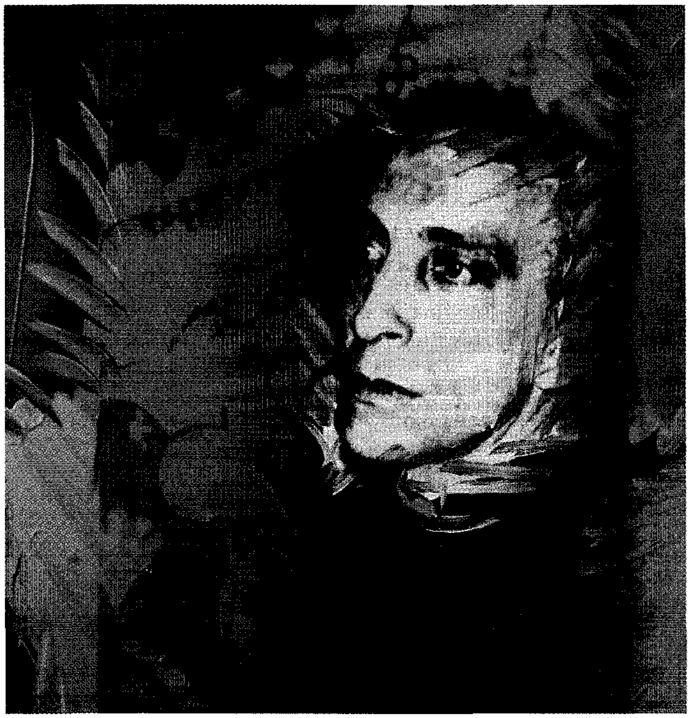
School for Scandal

How could it be that board members at the New York Academy of Art were too busy fighting with each other to notice that $175,000 was missing?

WERE ONE TO JUDGE BY THE number of gossip-column inches it rated, the New York Academy of Art's annual TriBeCa Ball last month was a big success. A twenty-piece big band entertained a crowd of 400 that included Tom Wolfe, Keith Richards, Patti Hansen, Robert De Niro, Chazz Palminteri, David Salle, Eric Fischl, Ross Bleckner, and Julian Schnabel. Nicole Miller donated 1,000 yards of red satin to decorate the ballroom in the Academy's vast new headquarters on Franklin Street.

The event netted $100,000 for the anti-abstractionist Academy—the only school in the country offering an M.F.A. in anatomical and figure drawing. But the individuals haggling over control of the institution should be grateful the evening came off at all, because the Academy is in pretty bad shape. In recent years, a number of professors—including artist Alfred Leslie—either have been fired or have resigned. "It's criminal what they've done," says Jack Beal, a composition professor who recently left the Academy acrimoniously. "There are no supplies, students are jammed three into a studio—I couldn't even get a slide projector for my class last fall."

Even worse, the Academy is attempting to bounce back from a nasty round of embezzlement, negligence, and power plays. At the center of the scandal are three men: rich, eccentric Stuart Pivar, a co-founder of the Academy; current board member and former chairman Dennis Smith; and Colgate heir and chairman Russell Colgate Wilkinson. Pivar sat on the Academy's board until November 1994, when, he alleges, he was "lied to and outmaneuvered" into forfeiting his position by Smith and Wilkinson.



An Andy Warhol portrait of New York Academy of Art co-founder Stuart Pivar.

Pivar is a man whom even close friends describe as mercurial, who readily cops to "not being able to keep my mouth shut," and whose commitment to the Academy has, his antagonists insist, depended largely on his mood at any given moment. "Just talking about Pivar gets me upset," says Wilkinson. "He is an angry man." It doesn't help matters that Pivar detests Wilkinson's wife, Eileen Guggenheim Wilkinson, who is dean of students. Pivar insists that his animosity toward Eileen is based solely on her poor handling of her job. But it is at the very least interesting to note that Pivar was involved with her sister, Barbara Guggenheim, who walked away from their fourteen-year relationship in 1990.

One afternoon several weeks before the party, Pivar sat in a late-sixteenth-century Venetian high-back chair by the fireplace in his vast Central Park West duplex apartment and railed on about "the criminality of some of the board members" and what havoc they have wrought at the institution he co-founded in 1980 with, among others, Andy Warhol. Smith and Wilkinson, he says, "have perpetrated the most horrible and outrageous thing in academia in the twentieth century." Even as he attempts to win back his place on its board, Pivar is suing the Academy for a total of $540,000, claiming the school lost two works and broke one piece of art he'd lent them.

But nasty conflicts are only the beginning of the Academy's problems, which surfaced in 1994 when a report prepared by educational consultant Robert Montgomery criticized the school for failing to maintain even the most basic features of an educational institution. It also took the board's financial- and educational-policy committees to task and cited them for being in violation of their own bylaws—the office of treasurer, for example, had been vacant for two years.

The report placed most of the blame on a contentious boardroom atmosphere created by Pivar's "disruptive, angry, and abusive" behavior. And so, according to Pivar, in November 1994, he reached an agreement with Smith whereby they would both resign for the good of the Academy, and Philadelphia businessman Leonard Andrews would become chairman (Smith's chairmanship, it had recently been discovered, was also a violation of the bylaws, which prohibited anyone from holding the office for more that two terms). But as soon as Pivar faxed in his resignation, he says, Smith called a founders' meeting and changed the bylaws so that the term-limit prohibition was eliminated. Though he admits that there *was* talk of his resignation, Smith denied Pivar's charge that he called a secret meeting and insists he stayed on as chairman only after An- *(continued on page 100)*

Painting courtesy of the collection of Stuart Pivar.

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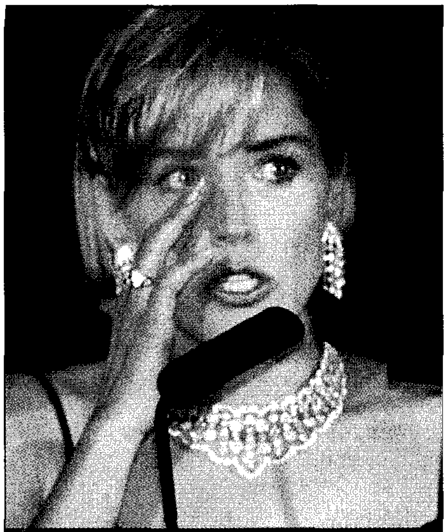
CAN AmFAR SURVIVE AIDS?

By Andrew Jacobs

After fourteen fractious years and a near bankruptcy, America's leading AIDS organization has new leadership, a new direction, and a new spokesperson, Sharon Stone. Now it faces the biggest challenge in its history.

IT MAY HAVE BEEN SHARON STONE'S finest performance. On a balmy spring evening in Cannes, the actress, along with 250 other boldfaced names, was crushed into the Moulin de Mougins, the three-star restaurant owned by chef Roger Verge. Prince Albert of Monaco, Isaac Mizrahi, Hugh Grant, Linda Evangelista, Harvey Keitel, and Adnan Khashoggi were just a few of those who had paid $1,000 a plate to benefit the American Foundation for AIDS Research, the largest and most prominent AIDS-research organization in the world.



Sharon Stone

Feisty, articulate, and undaunted, AmFAR's new chairwoman has vowed to raise $76 million in the next three years.

For most attendees, the May 26 dinner was just another pit stop in the weeklong orgy of glitz and photo ops that makes Cannes the most overexposed event on the social-climbing circuit. But then Stone ascended the dais and soured the giddy mood with talk of AIDS.

Draped in diamonds and wrapped in a skintight black dress, the star impatiently waited for the din to subside and then began imploring the crowd to pay attention. "I can't take it anymore," she said, finally surrendering to a torrent of sobs. "Every one of you has lost someone you love—it's not fair. This disease has taken the flowers of the earth."

For a moment, the black-tie crowd was stunned into an uneasy silence. ("If that was acting," said *Daily News* gossip Joanna Molloy, "then Sharon *deserves* an Oscar.") But even Stone's tears weren't enough to get the philanthropy flowing. Bidding for a bronze violin by the sculptor Arman was lackluster. "Come on," she yelled. "I'm trying to save lives here. I'm not kidding around." But only by shaming several celebrity agents and moguls by name did she manage to bring the bidding to life. In the end, Saudi Arabia's Prince Nawah grudgingly responded to Stone's exhortations, handing over $80,000 for the sculpture and another $22,000 for an emerald-and-sapphire ring lodged in Naomi Campbell's navel. The event raised $350,000 for AMFAR's parched coffers.

Stone's performance was a fitting metaphor for the beleagured state of America's AIDS effort fifteen years into the epidemic. Bored, burned-out, or convinced that the disease is no longer their problem, most Americans have come to view the epidemic as a relentless, unsolvable scourge. The once-ubiquitous red ribbons and the media headlines

Photograph by Robert Cardinale/Sygma.

The Matriarchs

Mathilde Krim (left) and Elizabeth Taylor made it acceptable—even fashionable—to give money for AIDS. But Taylor's patience with AmFAR has reportedly waned.

are disappearing. (A couple of years ago, it would have been unthinkable for a Hollywood liberal like Whoopi Goldberg to lampoon red-ribbon proliferation, as she did last week at the Oscars.) Like famine in Africa and violence in the inner city, AIDS has been added to the list of problems that society ritually wails about—but has largely given up on solving. In 1991, AIDS appeared in more than 2,000 headlines in the New York *Times*; last year it showed up just 500 times. "People are tired of hearing about AIDS," sighs Daniel Wolfe, communications director for the Gay Men's Health Crisis. "It simply isn't fashionable anymore. People are ready to throw money at the next disease."

In this atmosphere, America's leading AIDS organizations are literally begging for cash. Contributions to many AIDS groups have dipped precipitously since the start of the decade. Washington, D.C.'s preeminent AIDS charity, the Whitman-Walker Clinic, nearly shut its doors last year, just months before Philadelphia's Endowment for AIDS went belly up. In New York, the once flush Housing Works is struggling to meet its payroll.

But few organizations have fallen as hard as AMFAR, America's best-known AIDS organization and the one that helped transform the "gay plague" into the preeminent cause célèbre. Once so awash in money that it had four offices nationwide and a staff of 100, the New York–based foundation was forced last year to cut its $20 million budget by a quarter, close one of its offices, and lay off almost a third of its employees. With its donor base exhausted and its main fund-raiser—Elizabeth Taylor—sidelined by poor health, many of its supporters feared AMFAR was facing oblivion. In desperation, its leaders met to discuss what to do. "What we needed was a way to capture people's attention again, to take AIDS back into the mainstream," says board member Tom Stoddard. What they came up with was Sharon Stone.

ANOINTED AMFAR'S HONORARY CHAIRMAN LAST DECEMBER, STONE has been given the task of raising $76 million over the next three years. Already, by all accounts, she has helped inject new life into the organization. AMFAR officials believe the worst cuts are behind them. But in the long run Stone's success—and AMFAR's—may well determine the course of AIDS research into the next decade. While the $83 million AMFAR has so far spent on research is dwarfed by the federal government's $1.4 billion annual outlay, many of its early grants are beginning to bear fruit. AMFAR supported pioneering work on protease inhibitors and gene-therapy research at a time when many critics dismissed the technique as little more than mad science. Today, such treatments are considered the best hope for extending the lives of people with AIDS. "For the scientific community, AMFAR's troubles couldn't have come at a worse time," says Dr. Cal Cohen, research director at Boston's Community Research Initiative of New England. "It would be a tragedy if we had to slow down just when there is new hope on the horizon."

THE BURDEN OF LEADING THE FOUNDATION OUT of the abyss rests on the shoulders of a soft-spoken 69-year-old biologist named Mathilde Krim, AMFAR's founder and its driving force for the past fourteen years. Sitting in the study of her house on East 69th Street, Krim looks drawn and somber, chain-smoking Merits from a long plastic holder. Krim, who has never collected a salary from AMFAR, is only just beginning to recover from the loss of her husband, Arthur, who died more than a year ago at the age of 84. She hasn't taken a vacation in years. "Like everyone else, I'm exhausted," says Krim, who works from the home she shared with Arthur, the longtime president of United Artists and founder of Orion pictures. She attributes many of the organization's recent troubles to the long illness and death of her husband. "This has been a very sad period for me," says Krim. "While Arthur was sick, I was unable to travel or schmooze. I feel partly responsible for what has happened."

With her striking blue-green eyes and her platinum hair pulled taut in a bun, Krim looks more like an aging film star than an eminent scientist. Sipping coffee in her study, an Oscar sitting on a nearby shelf, she talks wistfully of AMFAR's early days. "When we started, no one expected we'd be at it for this long," says Krim. "We thought we'd find a cure and move on with our lives."

A self-described "incurable idealist," Krim has always been

Photograph by Pierre Aslan/Sip

drawn to the disenfranchised. Born to a Swiss father and Austrian mother, she joined Menachem Begin's Irgun guerrilla movement as a college student, helping to smuggle weapons to Palestine. Later, she married a Jewish student, converted to Judaism, and moved to Israel. Childhood memories of anti-Semitism, Krim says, propelled her into the fight against AIDS. "In the early days, when there was so much discrimination and talk of a quarantine, it reminded me of the concentration camps," she says. "Something had to be done."

When the first mysterious cases of AIDS began appearing in the early eighties, Krim was working as a cancer researcher at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Hospital. Dr. Joseph Sonnabend, a South African–born virologist with a largely gay practice in Greenwich Village, was among the first health-care professionals to confront what early observers termed GRID (gay-related immune deficiency). By 1982, with his caseload exploding, Sonnabend realized the disease required far greater attention and funding than a squeamish government was willing to provide. In desperation he approached Krim, an old friend and colleague, about starting a foundation that would help fund research.

Soon after, Sonnabend, Krim and a handful of scientists convened at the Krims' townhouse and, backed with $100,000 in seed money from Krim, founded the AIDS Medical Foundation—the first AIDS-research organization in America. The group eventually set up shop in a storage room at Arthur Krim's midtown law offices. A fearful landlord insisted they keep their name off of the lobby directory.

> Burnout among staff members is a constant problem.
>
> "Working at AmFAR isn't like working at other charities,"
>
> says one employee.
>
> "When you go to Oxfam, you don't see starving babies sitting at the desks."

The Krims were legendary figures in both Hollywood and in Democratic politics; from the start, Krim was not shy about putting their myriad connections to use. Arthur was a major fund-raiser, civil libertarian, and close associate of Presidents Kennedy, Johnson, and Carter. "Mathilde would call up people she knew and harangue them till they gave money," recalls one early associate. "She was unstoppable."

In 1985, the organization changed its name to the American Foundation for AIDS Research after merging with a Los Angeles–based charity Elizabeth Taylor had helped to set up with money left by Rock Hudson. Although she had little role in its day-to-day operation, Elizabeth Taylor brought AMFAR—and AIDS—immeasurable legitimacy, both among the general public and among the deep-pocket donors that kept the organization flush. Whether modeling the million-dollar Lachrymosa diamond mask at auction or delivering an impassioned speech before Congress, Taylor became the face of AMFAR and its most valuable asset.

WITH READY ACCESS TO BOTH HOLLYWOOD AND WALL STREET wealth, AMFAR effortlessly doubled its budget during its first few years. Its board was packed with the likes of David Geffen, Mrs. Michael Eisner, Michael Fuchs, and Abigail (Dear Abby) Van Buren. More than any other organization, AMFAR helped make it acceptable—even fashionable—to give money to AIDS. "They provided a safe place for A-list people to give money to queers and drug addicts," says Rodger McFarlane, who helped create AMFAR and later founded Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. "They knew how to meet the needs of corporate and celebrity donors—people who want a press release and photo to accompany their contribution."

If, in the words of one longtime employee, "Krim was AMFAR's brain and Taylor its soul," Terry Beirn—the third member of AMFAR's founding triumvirate—was the musculature that held the organization together. Beirn, a savvy former television reporter, was the organization's de facto executive director and the man who pushed AMFAR into the controversial realm of public policy. A charismatic, chain-smoking workaholic, he split his time between AMFAR's New York headquarters and Senator Ted Kennedy's Washington office, where he worked on AIDS policy issues. Diagnosed with HIV in 1983, he believed his own survival was inextricably linked to AMFAR's. "If the phone rang at 2 A.M., it was invariably Terry, and of course, he was working," says Marisa Cardinale, a former AMFAR fund-raiser. " 'I work so hard,' he once told me, 'because I have a gun to my head.' "

Beirn, who died of AIDS in 1991, is either deified or despised by those who knew him. "Terry could be a spoiled, arrogant asshole, but he knew the ins and outs of Washington," says one former colleague. Adds Sonnabend: "Terry knew how to use the media and get stories placed. No doors were closed to him."

During the few short years he worked at AMFAR, Beirn's achievements were astounding: He brokered the merger between Krim's and Taylor's organizations, helped draft the Ryan White Care Act, and was instrumental in getting people with AIDS included under the landmark 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. "Terry did more for AIDS than anyone else I know," says former assistant Spencer Cox. "He built AMFAR into a national organization."

Bolstered by an enthusiastic cadre of volunteers, AMFAR began to raise huge amounts of money. It poured the proceeds into groundbreaking research, including early studies that helped prevent mothers from transmitting HIV to their unborn children and dramatically slashed the rate of transmission among drug addicts. Its mission was to fund the kinds of investigations that the government would not. "They may not have found the cure," says Dr. Donald Abrams, assistant director of AIDS programs at San Francisco General Hospital, "but AMFAR dollars have significantly improved the lives of many, many people."

FROM THE BEGINNING, AMFAR FACED ANOTHER, EQUALLY DAUNTING challenge: how to interest good, square Americans in a disease that preyed on society's fringe. By pinning red ribbons on celebrity lapels, AMFAR helped transform an epidemic of the ghetto into something almost stylish, and its reliance on glammy fund-raisers and Hollywood sex appeal set an example that many other AIDS groups followed. But the strategy also led to trouble down the road. In its effort to make AIDS hip, AMFAR overlooked the cardinal rule of fashion: What's fabulous one day becomes passé the next. And in its appeals to the monied elite, AMFAR largely ignored grassroots donors, alienating many gay men and AIDS activists in the process.

More than any other organization, AMFAR helped shape the public perception of AIDS, particularly in the media. Early on, frustrated by his failure to win attention to the epidemic, Beirn began to promote the notion that AIDS was on the brink of infecting white, well-off, straight Americans. Even within AMFAR, the tactic was controversial. While it helped draw attention to the epidemic—and contributions to AMFAR—it ultimately drove Sonnabend from the organization. "I felt that by presenting this apocalyptic scenario, AMFAR was provoking fear among heterosexuals that would lead to attacks against gay men," says Dr. Sonnabend, who went on to found another AIDS organization, Community Research Initiative on AIDS. "The hard evidence for a crossover [of infection to heterosexuals] just wasn't there. I was angry about the direction [in which] AMFAR was heading." Indeed, this doomsday scenario never materialized in the United States, where AIDS remains a disease afflicting mostly minorities, intravenous-drug users, and gay men.

Beirn's death was a devastating blow to the organization. Many early employees believe it marked the point at which AMFAR lost its way. "Frankly, AMFAR has never recovered from losing Terry, and I don't think Mathilde has either," says Marisa Cardinale, who left AMFAR in 1991 to start CRIA with Sonnabend. "After Terry died, there was a real hole, says another former employee, Susan Kaminsky. "All the good people began to leave as soon as they could."

Krim's *in your face* style may have also driven away billionaire board member **David Geffen.** "David didn't like being told what to do by a Swiss *schoolmarm,*" claims one well-placed source.

AS AMFAR GREW ALONGSIDE THE epidemic, it began to embrace a more professional profile. In doing so, it unwittingly—and perhaps inevitably—drove away many early supporters, who felt the organization was losing its soul. "In the beginning, we were like a family," recalls Harley Hackette, one of AMFAR's first employees. "Everyone was really driven, and we worked till all hours. Then everything changed." Once run by a staff of six, by 1990 the organization had dozens of employees, many of whom were personally untouched by the disease. That year Krim also hired Bob Brown, a former March of Dimes executive whose two-year tenure as AMFAR'S director proved disastrous.

Brown provoked widespread dissension and helped alienate some of the organization's bedrock supporters in the gay community. "Bob Brown was straight, white, and corporate and wanted AMFAR to be a reflection of himself," says Rebecca Pringle Smith, a former associate program manager. A wave of firings and resignations marked his stewardship. In one of his first moves as executive director, he forced David Corkery, the organization's director of public affairs, to resign, apparently because he was viewed as a rabble-rousing activist. Almost a dozen other employees eventually followed Corkery out the door. In her letter of resignation, Trish Halleron, AMFAR's director of education, branded Brown "homophobic, sexist, crass, disrespectful and incompetent."Others charged him with being anti-Semitic. In the end, Brown was let go, reportedly at the insistence of Elizabeth Taylor, who, like much of AMFAR's staff, was unhappy with his leadership. (Brown could not be reached for comment.)

As the epidemic continued unabated and scores of its employees succumbed to the disease, early enthusiasm gave way to despair. "Working at AMFAR isn't like working at other charities," says Sally Morrison, who started there as a volunteer and now tends to the organization's public profile. "If you go to Oxfam, you don't have starving babies sitting at the desks."

Many believe that the organization's chronic morale problems were exacerbated by Krim's increasing isolation from AMFAR's rank and file. When she was not appearing at AMFAR galas or reviewing grant proposals, the chairwoman worked out of her home, sheltered from the organization's workaday problems by her executives. Some employees blame her for not intervening in disputes and blithely ignoring intra-staff squabbles. "Krim is an incredible fund-raiser and an amazing woman," says one staff member. "But she's holed up in an ivory tower."

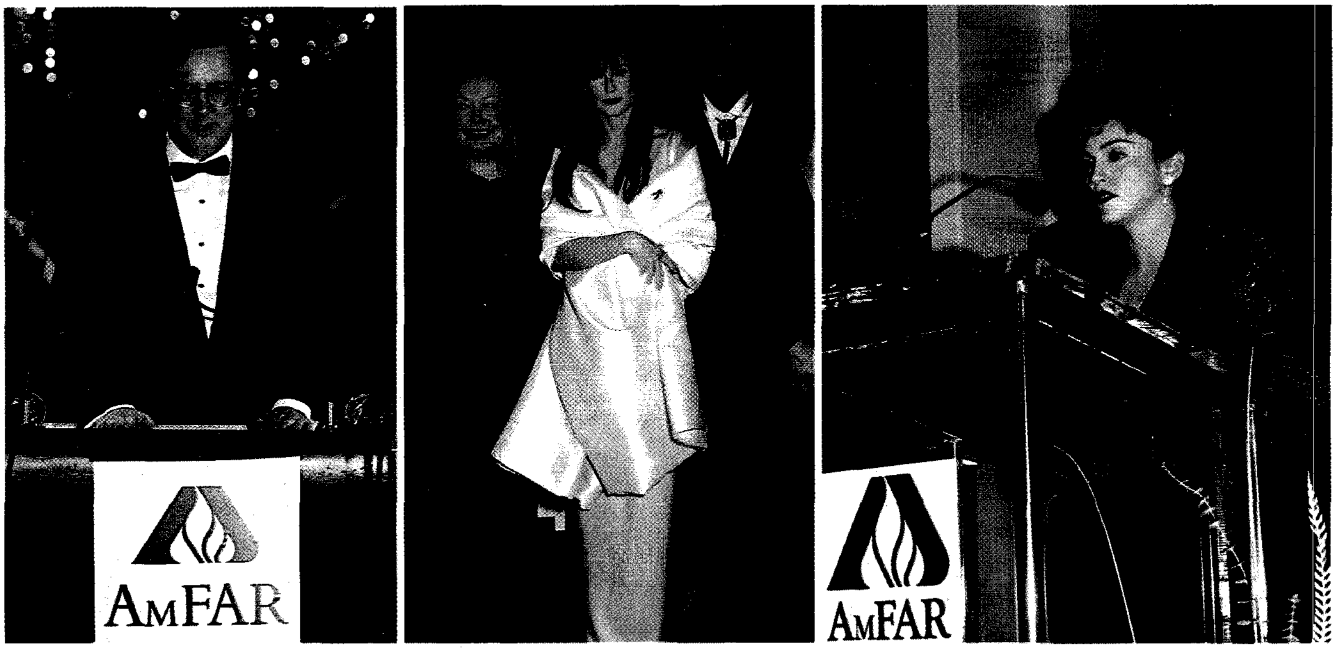
HOLED UP IN HER OWN IVORY TOWER IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Elizabeth Taylor was also becoming disenchanted. Although she was AMFAR's Midas, Taylor was often a nightmare for her handlers. She required top-notch accommodations, turned up late to AMFAR functions, and sometimes cancelled at the last minute, usually blaming health problems.

"Liz is a star and acts like a star," says one AMFAR staffer. "She can be a royal pain in the ass." In one particularly outlandish example of Taylor's special needs, AMFAR was forced to rent her an expensively appointed villa in Cannes during the 1993 Cinema Against AIDS event because the city's five-star hotels were fully booked for the film festival.

WHILE THEIR RELATIONS HAVE always been cordial, AMFAR's founding matriarchs were mismatched from the start. Insiders say Krim was often irritated by the star's demands and by her infrequent, divalike appearances at board meetings. "She played the movie-star thing to the hilt," said one former board member. "She'd sit there at these serious meetings with her perfectly coiffed hair, her face immaculately made up and *emote*."

Taylor's commitment to AIDS was an intensely personal one, magnified by the death of her close friend Rock Hudson; the death of her assistant, Roger Wall; and, more recently, the discovery that her daughter-in-law, Eileen Getty, was HIV-positive. But her interest in biomedical research, AMFAR's raison d'être, is limited at best. "Liz is the kind of person who wants to see people with AIDS getting fed," says a former colleague. "She's not fascinated by research." In 1989, at Taylor's insistence, the organization reluctantly started up an international division to run prevention programs in Nepal, Argentina, and Africa. The department was eliminated last December.

Taylor's enthusiasm for AMFAR dimmed noticeably several years ago. According to AMFAR insiders, a feud with Bob Brown over how to spend proceeds from a 1991 fund-raiser in Switzerland pushed Taylor over the edge. The highly successful Art Against AIDS had grossed more than $1 million, money that



Star Search

From left: Steve Forbes, Krim, Demi Moore, Greg Louganis, and Madonna: Increasingly, AmFAR has been hard-pressed to find celebrities willing to donate their services.

Taylor wanted to go toward her pet international programs. Brown, however, insisted that the profits be used domestically. In the end, Taylor won out. A few months later, her antagonist was sent packing.

But even Brown's firing failed to placate Taylor. By the end of the year, she had set up the Elizabeth Taylor AIDS Foundation, an unmistakable sign that her patience with AMFAR had expired. The rift widened around the time of her October 1991 marriage to Larry Fortensky. Instead of donating proceeds from the sale of wedding photos to AMFAR, the million-dollar-plus windfall went to her newly created foundation. Today, although Taylor's foundation still funnels six-figure gifts to AMFAR each year, most of her personal contributions go elsewhere. More important, her disengagement from AMFAR has also taken a damaging toll on the bottom line. "Liz Taylor appearing at an event meant the difference between us making $20,000 or $200,000," says a former employee in AMFAR's development office. "She was our cash cow."

According to one source, donors who shelled out big bucks were promised an audience with the actress, who, to AMFAR's chagrin, hasn't attended a single benefit in more than two years. Even so, AMFAR emphatically denies reports of bad blood between Taylor and the organization and blames the star's low profile on her poor health. "Everyone is bent on proving that Liz Taylor has abandoned us," says Sally Morrison, the organization's liaison to the actress. "It's simply not true." Chen Sam, Taylor's spokeswoman, said Taylor could not comment for this story "due to her illness."

AMFAR'S TROUBLES WITH TAYLOR COINCIDED with a sharp drop in donations to the organization. Like other AIDS organizations that depend on black-tie events for survival, AMFAR has discovered that the salad days of old-fashioned star-driven fund-raising are over. Long dependent on the kindness of celebrities, it has been increasingly unable to find performers willing to donate their talent, and has had to postpone events whose proceeds it was banking on. "A few years ago, you could ask any entertainer to sing and dance," Krim says, sadly. "But now they say, 'Enough, I did it last year.' "

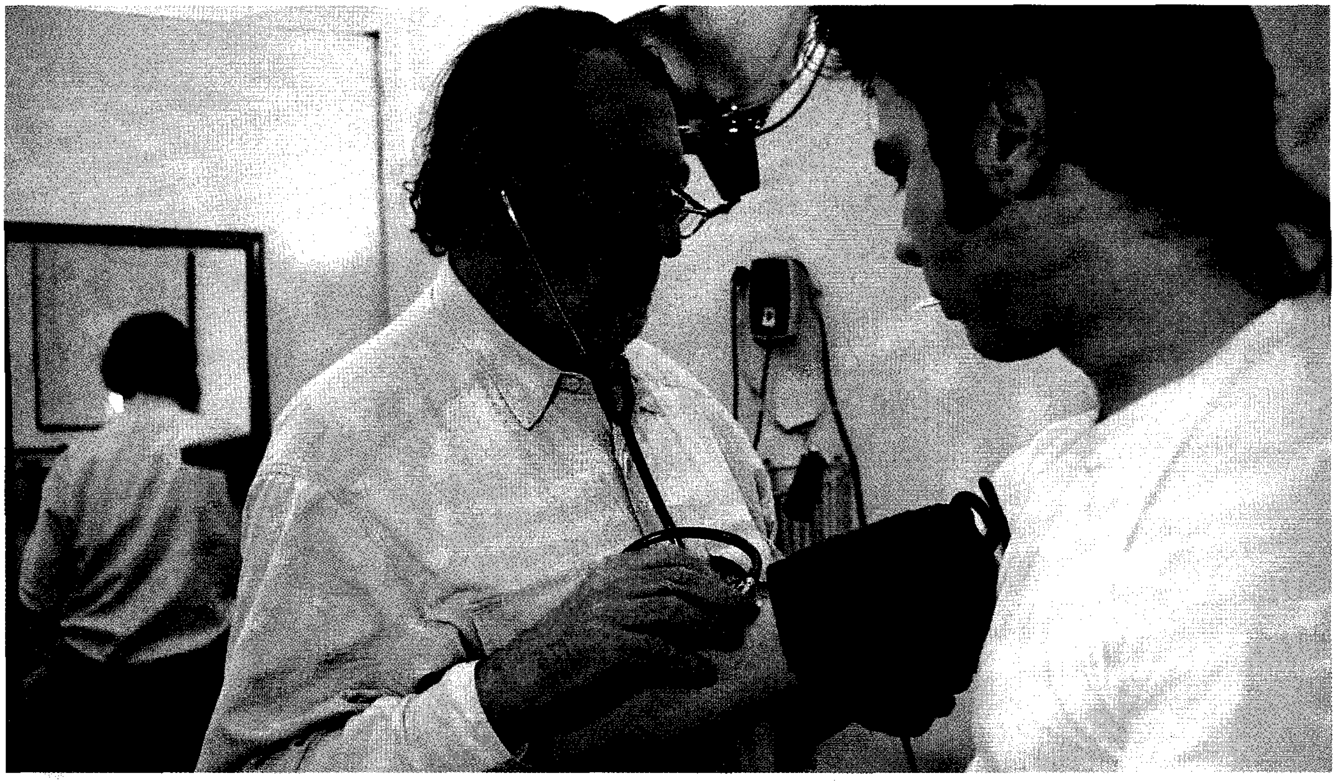
Adding to AMFAR's plight is the burgeoning number of AIDS nonprofits competing for a shrinking pool of donors. High-profile newcomers like the Arthur Ashe, Elton John, and Magic Johnson foundations are vying for the same check-writing set as AMFAR. "Last year, we had to work twice as hard to bring in less money," says Jonathan Canno, an AMFAR board member. "And donors require a lot more stroking these days."

Straight-shooting and impatient, Krim has never much been one for stroking. In a 1992 *Daily News* interview, she scolded Calvin Klein for not giving more money to AIDS. Since then, the designer has directed the bulk of his philanthropy to other AIDS organizations. Krim's in-your-face style may also have driven away board member David Geffen. "David didn't like being told what to do by a Swiss schoolmarm," says one former board member." Now a key supporter of AIDS Project Los Angeles, Geffen made headlines last year when he donated $4 million to GMHC and to God's Love We Deliver, whose new SoHo headquarters bears his name. AMFAR, say insiders, was pointedly passed over. "With all our financial woes, it was really painful to be dissed by Geffen in such a big way," said one development staff member.

But AMFAR's critics also contend that the organization hastened its slide with spending habits inappropriate for a charity. In 1991, the organization rented prime space at Third Avenue and 46th Street. At the same time, it expanded its operations in Los Angeles, where AMFAR took up an entire floor in a tony Wilshire Boulevard building, and opened two other offices, one in Washington, D.C., and another in Rockville, Maryland.

Until its recent crisis, according to former and current employees, AMFAR spent top dollar for everything from senior staff salaries and office furniture to accommodations for Taylor. At one point, claims a knowledgeable AMFAR insider, 25 percent of the foundation's budget was dedicated to overhead. "There was little concern for how much money was being spent," says Mitchell Speer, who oversaw AMFAR's widely lauded Treatment Directory, a quarterly summary of experimental drug trials that was eliminated last year and then revived after widespread protests. "Instead of buying lunch at the deli downstairs, we'd

otographs: left to right, Steve Allan/Gamma-Liaison; Anthony Savignano/Photoreporters; Andy Berliner/Gamma-Liaison.



The Critic

One of AmFAR's founders, Joseph Sonnabend, believes the organization has strayed dangerously from its roots.

order food for staff meetings from Burke & Burke." Because the organization was bicoastal, senior staff members flew back and forth for board meetings twice a year. Morrison, however, angrily dismisses charges that AMFAR has been profligate, pointing out that over 70 percent of its donations go directly to research. "People think we're living off the fat of the land and that I only fly first-class," says Morrison. "That's simply not true and it's frustrating that this image persists."

By 1995 AMFAR was facing a $4 million deficit. After years of steadily increasing budgets, the sudden shortfall caught it by surprise. Unlike many nonprofits, which often keep a year's worth of operating funds in the bank as a hedge against bad times, AMFAR had almost no cushion. "It was sheer arrogance for them not to maintain a financial buffer against hard times," says McFarlane. "This is what happens when you glom onto glam money without diversifying your funding base. How many parties can you throw?" Krim admits the organization erred by not banking more money, but says she believed it was more important for AMFAR to throw all its resources at AIDS. "It just wouldn't look good if we were sitting on cash during a crisis," she says. "Perhaps we were too idealistic." But while organizations like GMHC fell back on a huge network of smaller donors during hard times, AMFAR was left in the lurch. "I think we gave the impression that we didn't need money from ordinary people," says board member Tom Stoddard. "That really hurt us."

CHASTENED BY ITS NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE, AMFAR HAS BEGUN A slow and painful climb out of the hole. Jerry Radwin, another March of Dimes executive, has taken over AMFAR's day-to-day operations. In his first order of business, Radwin retained a P.R. consultant to help blunt fallout from the budget cuts. "AMFAR has never done a good job of telling the world what it does," says Stoddard. "They realize that their biggest problem is public perception." Meanwhile, a $2 million educational campaign funded by Kenneth Cole has helped put AMFAR's name back in the news, although the spin hasn't been entirely positive. One poster, featuring the line "If the Pope had AIDS, he'd need more than your prayers," was quickly pulled after drawing strong condemnation from the Catholic League.

With contributions from benefit-circuit regulars falling off, AMFAR has also set about expanding and revitalizing its roster of contributors. Increasingly, sources say, it has come to believe that its long-term survival rests in its ability to win back gay men, who remain a key source of support for most AIDS organizations. "If gay men don't start giving more money to research, they'll be living with this epidemic for the rest of their lives," says Peter Staley, one of three HIV-positive people on AMFAR's 30-member board. "These are the people we need on our side."

Krim is rising to the challenge with typical determination. On a steamy Saturday last August, she joined dozens of gay men on the Fire Island Pines ferry: middle-aged couples cradling dogs, younger gays with well-tended pecs, and rail-thin men with vermilion blotches on their faces. Planted in the midst of this all-male cargo was Dr. Krim, in her trademark bun, wearing oversize *faux* pearls and a loose-fitting white pantsuit. For the first time in years, Krim is making the two-hour voyage from Manhattan to the Pines, a veritable gay summer camp—and one of the wealthiest communities in America. But on this particular visit, she isn't looking for contributions—at least not explicitly. "I'm just going to revisit some of my troops and the people for whom I first started working," she says as the boat pulls into the tiny Pines harbor.

A few moments later, she disappears in the embrace of Mr. Leather New York, Andrew Borden, a six-foot-seven-inch mustachioed giant with silver bands reining each bicep. Standing in the Island Club, one of the town's three gay bars, she "meets and greets" with local residents, accompanied by the organization's new full-time gay liaison, Candida Scott Piel. The crowd

Photograph by Tom McKitterick/Impact Visuals.

listens attentively as Krim recounts AMFAR's history and rattles off its accomplishments. "People meet Mathilde, and they feel hope," gushes Borden, who rode with Dr. Krim in last year's Gay Pride Parade—her first ever appearance at the event.

In December, hundreds of gay and AIDS activists flocked to Krim's townhouse for a World AIDS Day reception. Despite the ostensibly somber occasion, the mood was decidedly buoyant, as partygoers sipped cocktails and tried their best not to gawk at Sharon Stone, who held court on a staircase above the crowd. as far as AMFAR was concerned, the real stars of the party were the guests: a disgruntled demographic AMFAR is desperately trying to woo back.

Earlier that day at a United Nations press conference, Krim read a statement announcing Stone's appointment as AMFAR's new chairwoman, assigned the task of headlining a three-year corporate-fund-raising campaign. The announcement, say insiders, could be made only after Morrison spent months assuring Taylor her role would not be entirely usurped by the newer, younger, movie star. (After a Reuters story the next day reported that Stone had "replaced" Taylor, AMFAR prevailed upon the wire service to run a correction.)

In any case, Taylor—who recently underwent a second hip-replacement surgery—is in no shape to help bring AMFAR back from the brink. "She doesn't have the legs to run around anymore," quipped one of her handlers. "And like everyone else, she's just burned out." In many ways, Stone is the perfect heir to Taylor, who has been fighting the good fight for more than a decade. "Sharon wasn't affected by AIDS until recently," says Morrison. "She hasn't been knocking on doors for fifteen years." Energetic, feisty, articulate, she is also, says Morrison, "not the kind of woman to take no for an answer."

Stone's personal interest in AIDS was sparked by the illness of her longtime acting coach Roy London, who died of the disease in 1994. "Losing Roy was like losing a piece of my heart," she says, tearfully. "He was like a third parent to me. He changed my life." But while AMFAR officials are ecstatic about Stone's commitment, they privately worry about whether the actress has the time and stamina to tackle the job. "Sharon's a lot more accessible than Liz ever was, but she's also a lot more busy," says one staff member. "We're concerned about her staying power." Stone scoffs at the notion that her career will prevent her from fulfilling her duties to AMFAR. "I will do whatever Mathilde asks of me," she says curtly. "I have plenty of time to sleep when I'm dead."

Privately, some officials wonder whether Stone has the time and stamina for the job. "I will do whatever Mathilde asks of me," she replies curtly. "I'll have plenty of time to sleep when I'm dead."

In addition to fund-raising, Stone is expected to testify at congressional hearings, twist arms at corporate luncheons, and make appearances at big-ticket benefits. Whenever possible, AMFAR employees are coaching her on the political, medical, and sociological aspects of the epidemic. Morrison and Krim even spent several days on the set of *Diabolique* in Pennsylvania, where they tutored her between takes. "It's a big change for me to be a public speaker," she says. "I do my best when I speak extemporaneously."

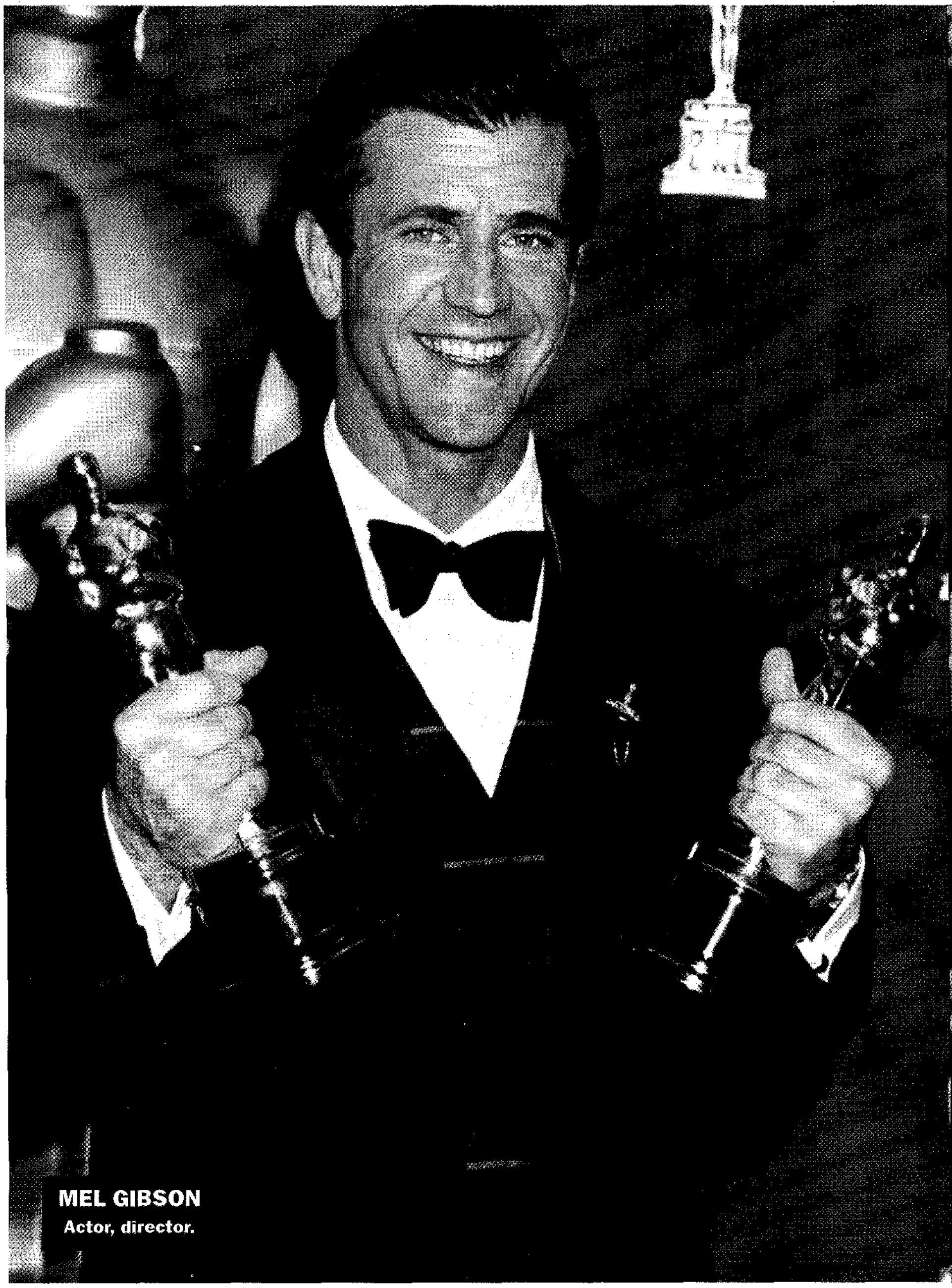
In fact, Stone's shoot-from-the-hip style has brought her grief in the past. Last year she got herself in trouble by telling the National Press Club that reducing her caffeine intake helped cure her of cancer. (She later insisted that she had been misunderstood.) Never one to keep her opinions to herself, Stone is emphatic about what must be done to stem the spread of AIDS. "Our government has inflated the fear surrounding AIDS," she says. "There's too much shame associated with the disease. There's no education because right-wing people can't accept the fact that teenagers are having sex. *Hello!* This pretext of sexual decorum is outlandish, and it frightens me. It's a terrible legacy for our children, and I can't live with that."

AFTER YEARS OF TAKING ITS MONEY FOR GRANTED, AMFAR is settling into a period of newfound austerity. Jerry Radwin, AMFAR's chief operating officer, has received high marks for clearing up much of the organization's chaos. Unlike past directors, the mild-mannered Radwin has provoked little dissent within the organization's diverse staff. "He's very nonjudgmental," says Morrison, "and very shrewd with numbers." Another AMFAR employee puts it more bluntly: "Jerry saved our ass. No one knew what they were doing, and he made them face the music." Most employees say AMFAR is infused with new hope and new energy. "We're seeing a light at the end of the tunnel." says Radwin.

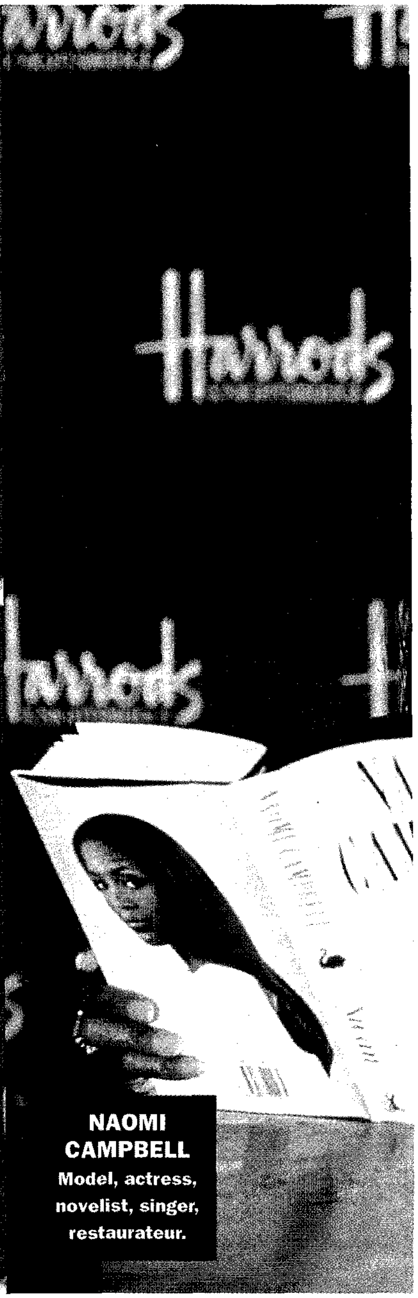
While it still faces criticism, even AMFAR's fiercest detractors don't want to see the organization fold. In a nation that supports 18,750 separate AIDS charities, AMFAR is among the few with a national reach, and one of just two that fund research. "Getting food and housing to people with AIDS is admirable," says Peter Staley. "But only science can get us out of this mess." At a time when AIDS kills one American every fifteen minutes, AMFAR—unencumbered by the bureaucratic, financial, and political obstacles that hinder governments and drug companies—is helping to get medicine into bodies faster than ever before. "Our ability to solve this epidemic is definitely improved because of AMFAR," says Dr. Cal Cohen. "With these new drugs, its survival has become more urgent than ever. People are now being kept alive by one intervention to another—it's these lives that AMFAR is saving." AMFAR research dollars reach laboratories three times faster than federal dollars. "What we offer is hope," says Dr. Jeffrey Laurence, head of New York Hospital–Cornell Medical Center's AIDS Virus Research Lab and a senior scientific consultant at AMFAR. "We can take gambles on promising ideas that the NIH won't dare touch."

Looking to the future, Mathilde Krim, who has invested fourteen years of her life in the organization, is sober but hopeful. "You know, I'm an old lady now. I sometimes look out on my garden and think, maybe I should stop and spend time on the flowers. But I look and see the destruction AIDS has caused, the young, vital people it has killed, and I know I cannot stop. With a lot of work and a little luck, AIDS could be cured within my lifetime," she says, with a determined drag on her cigarette. "If it takes Sharon Stone to get people interested in this again, then we'll give them Sharon Stone." ■

THE NEW RENAI



MEL GIBSON
Actor, director.



NAOMI CAMPBELL
Model, actress, novelist, singer, restaurateur.

Now that Mel and Emma have won Oscars for, respectively, directing and screenwriting,

Photographs: left to right, Everett Collection; Capitol Pictures /LGI; Steve Sands/Outline.

SANCE PEOPLE

KEANU REEVES
Actor, rock star.

ar we've truly entered the era of out-of-control celebrity multitasking.

BY ALEXANDRA LANGE

LAST MONDAY'S OSCAR CEREMONIES were, in many ways, a triumph of the wills. Mel Gibson's will to create the first truly Scottish epic, Tim Robbins's will to turn the death penalty into a watchable film, Emma Thompson's will to write herself indelibly into a picture. Sure, they deserved their statuettes (well, maybe not Mel, but certainly Emma, who has been such a good sport lately), yet there is something *off* about already fully fêted celebrities graciously accepting an entirely new set of accolades. Were the Oscars given for quality or quantity? A reward for genuine flair at a multiplicity of disciplines or an entirely fresh way to kowtow before the Hollywood satraps?

It is a truth universally acknowledged that the culture business is in a period of consolidation. What is less universally acknowledged is that our cultural figures are being consolidated as well. The New Renaissance People, men and women whose celebrity we have fostered in their chosen fields, are expanding their hegemonies at an alarming rate, pushing out the merely mono-talented to make room for the new, Hydra-like multitasking superdilettante. We are entering a period in which everyone will be famous for fifteen careers, where sheer chutzpa is seen as artistic integrity, where celebrities finally achieve their destiny and become no more and no less than endlessly marketable brand names.

Think of Paul Newman grinning from the supermarket aisles; or football and (until this year) baseball star Deion Sanders's album on the rap shelves; or George Hamilton on his very own talk show with his very own ex-wife, on bottles of his suntanning cream *and* his restaurant's menu; or retired assistant district attorney JFK Jr.'s name on the cover of *George;* or Steve Martin opening big with an Off Broadway smash (about Einstein, no less).

They are taking up all the space. Airtime, face time, magazine columns, and television specials. To the conspiracy-minded, it means no one new has a chance, because all of these established, entrenched, madly consolidating entertainment megaliths operate under one assumption: What sold once will sell again. Hence, the entertainment octopus throws its promotional budget not behind the underknown talent (say, recently deceased oratorio composer Olivier Messaien) but behind the sure thing (say, recently exhumed oratorio composer Paul McCartney). Noncelebrity books, couture, home furnishings rarely get a chance to penetrate the nation's cultural consciousness. As newly celebrified epic novelist David Foster Wallace has proved, you have to hit them with a brick.

The beauty part of watching these legions of New Renaissance men and women filling the information superhighways and byways is that no risk is involved. Not to investor or invested. The star need not clamber his or her way up another greasy pole but only leap, Tarzan-like, to similar heights. No one says no when Quentin Tarantino wants to star, Michael Stipe wants to direct, Robert De Niro wants to start a boîte. And the investors, if they play their stars right, recoup their money and then some.

The infamous star becomes a famous writer, the fading singer an 800-number interior decorator, her ex an honorable member of the House majority, the downtown artist an uptown blockbuster (he hopes) director. The Renaissance Person phenomenon shares traits with Hollywood's sequel fixation; only the media change. The packagers are betting on the endless transferability of fame—from CD cover to TV show to movie to "I want to direct" to artist to, perhaps, mogul. But not quite that fast.

> THE STAR NEED NOT CLAMBER HIS OR HER WAY UP ANOTHER GREASY POLE BUT ONLY LEAP, TARZAN-LIKE, TO SIMILAR HEIGHTS.

TO BE A NEW RENAISSANCE PERSON (RP) IS not an easy thing. There are requirements. First of all, you must already be legitimately famous for something. This may seem obvious, because you're reading a story about celebrities, and Renaissance Personhood is, if nothing else, a celebrity trend. But there are (and this is a whole other issue) dozens of celebrities running around *who haven't done anything yet.* The celebrity-offspring set, most recently seen populating the sets of the various movies about Andy Warhol, are not RPs—notwithstanding all their rock bands, modeling careers, designer baby-doll T-shirts, and MTV appearances. The Sofia Coppolas and Donovan Leitches of the world are merely line extensions of more famous relatives, living off the float of fame. Some, like Donatella Versace, can design international collections, be the inspiration for a new scent, and spark a hair-color trend but still not be an RP. The last name will always be Gianni's.

Next, your new career must be more than a direct, automatic extension of the old one. Turning from acting to modeling, perhaps part of a larger realization that just standing around can pay better than emoting, does not count. Designer and cosmetic pinups Elizabeth Hurley, Tim Roth, Melanie Griffith, and John Malkovich are not RPs, though if they began designing their own line of clothing or makeup, or began taking the photographs themselves, they would be. By the same token, models becoming actresses, or selling underwear with their own name on the label, are merely taking control of the means of production. Elle MacPherson "acting" in *If Lucy Fell* while wearing Elle MacPherson briefs does not an RP make.

Third, you have to be taking self-importance to a new and different place. Model-actress, actor-director, rock star–actor are all hyphenates we've seen before. And they make some sense. If you stand around in front of cameras long enough, you probably do start to wonder why they aren't rolling. And if you can make yourself weep to your own lyrics night after night, an acting career seems a natural sideline. So Courtney Love, brunette and skinny as the wife of Larry Flynt in the forthcoming *The People vs. Larry Flynt,* is merely following a path smoothed recently by Whitney Houston, Cher, and Sting; and earlier by David Bowie, Elvis, Ringo Starr, and the Rat Pack. If anything, making the transition is harder now that the technically undemanding, crooner-friendly "road movie" and "beach movie" forms have fallen into desuetude.

The opposite tack, from actor to rock star, is an entirely new and more improbable development, all the odder for being embraced almost solely by method-acting pretty boys. Keanu Reeves with Dogstar, Johnny Depp with P, and now Kevin Bacon with the Bacon Brothers are passing off grungy wardrobes, tattoos, and decent rock-star moves as evidence of musical talent. Mare Winningham, who released a folk-rock album in 1992 and was nominated for an Oscar this year for her portrayal of a folk-rock singer in *Georgia,* may have taken synergy to a new level. And then there's that newly reinvigorated RP subgenre: the former porn star or pin-up or prostitute turned musician—Traci Lords, Vanessa Williams, and Samantha Fox made it possible. Divine Brown makes it a cliché.

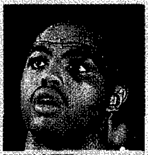
Music is a growth area for RPs, probably because of the cinematic style of MTV, or the increasingly video-like style of movies (or sports, for that matter—Shaquille only barely bothers to rap in *his* videos). Henry Rollins, actor–poet–rock star–Gen-X magazine-cover subject, has managed to take his testosterone-laced shtick from Lollapalooza to MTV to assorted East Village "spoken word" assemblies to the big screen. The same arc is being traced by hip-hoppers turned sitcom stars Queen Latifah, Will Smith, LL Cool J, and now Brandy, who have transferred their musical personae into our homes, simulating their pre-stardom lives with post-stardom appeal. It's only a matter of time before rapper Coolio, having walked the runways for Tommy Hilfiger, turns the L.A. of his videos into a West Coast–slacker sitcom—beach parties, house parties, and transportation difficulties on a weekly basis, with some safe-sex messages thrown in.

Last but not least, quantity counts. One hyphen is not enough to make you an RP all-star. Naomi Campbell's status as a model-actress-writer-singer-restaurateur moves her ahead of her fellow models, and far ahead of Cindy Crawford, who may be deleting "actress" from her résumé as we speak. (Though Veronica Webb, with her postfeminist philosophizing, can arguably best Campbell on the intellectual-credibility front.) "Investing" in a restaurant is not really a sign of true RP-hood. It's invariably little more than a clever marketing ploy. But opening your own winery? Along with continental gourmands Gerard Depardieu and Luciano Pavarotti, Francis Ford Coppola and the Smothers Brothers own vineyards. That's evidence of real reach, real ambition.

OTHER PROFESSIONS PROVIDE AN EVEN BETter platform for the growth-as-an-artist, allows-me-to-express-a-new-side-of-myself protests that so often accompany forays into new media. Writing, for example, with its undeniable bookish, literate connotations, attracts those hoping to heighten public awareness of their otherwise not immediately self-evident gravitas. How else to explain Ethan Hawke's infamous novel, publication date unknown (its $300,000 price much the talk of Manhattan's bitter noncelebrity salonistes), chronicling the life of an attractive Ethan Hawke–like Village resident around the turn of the millennium. Or the late William Kunstler's rhyming odes to O.J. Or philanthropist Brooke Astor, who must have felt so vindicated to see her poem appear in *The New Yorker* last month.

TEN-TRICK PONIES

It's not the quality; it's the quantity and sheer reach of *enterprise that turns a run-of-the-mill star into a modern-day Renaissance Person.*



	MODEL	ACTOR	DIRECTOR	PRODUCER	SCRIPTWRITER	COLUMNIST	NOVELIST	ARTIST/DEALER	MUSICIAN	INTELLECTUAL	VINTNER	RESTAURATEUR	PUBLISHER	ATHLETE	ROAD RACER	POLITICIAN	TALKING HEAD	ENTREPRENEUR	EXECUTIVE
▶ CHARLES BARKLEY	✓	✓										✓		✓		✓			
DAVID BYRNE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓								✓	✓	
NAOMI CAMPBELL	✓	✓					✓		✓			✓							
CHER		✓							✓					✓				✓	
FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA			✓	✓	✓						✓		✓						✓
CLINT EASTWOOD		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓				✓			
▶ STEVE FORBES										✓			✓			✓			✓
NEWT GINGRICH		✓					✓			✓						✓	✓	✓	
ARNE GLIMCHER			✓	✓				✓											
GEORGE HAMILTON	✓	✓									✓	✓					✓	✓	
▶ ETHAN HAWKE	✓	✓	✓				✓												
ARIANNA HUFFINGTON						✓				✓						✓	✓		
LAUREN HUTTON	✓	✓						✓									✓		
▶ MADONNA	✓	✓		✓					✓			✓							✓
PAUL NEWMAN		✓	✓										✓		✓			✓	
SHAQUILLE O'NEAL		✓							✓			✓		✓				✓	
YOKO ONO		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓								✓	
RICHARD PETTY															✓	✓			
KEANU REEVES	✓	✓							✓										
▶ JULIAN SCHNABEL		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓										
SYLVESTER STALLONE		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓				✓							
STING		✓		✓					✓	✓							✓		
MICHAEL STIPE			✓	✓				✓	✓									✓	
▶ BARBRA STREISAND		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓						✓			
VERONICA WEBB	✓	✓				✓				✓							✓		
BRUCE WILLIS		✓		✓					✓			✓							
ROBERT WILSON		✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓									
▶ OPRAH WINFREY		✓		✓								✓					✓		✓

Photographs: top to bottom, Bellenger/Sport/Sipa; Robert Maass/Sipa; Steve Allen/Gamma-Liaison; Globe Photos; R. Montamedi/Ron Galella; Stephen Trupp/Globe Photos; David Allen/LGI.

And let us not forget Joan Collins, who went so far as to sue to preserve her reputation as a novelist. Joan may not count, though. *Infamous* is really no more than a chesty riposte to her best-selling sister Jackie's heaving-bosom sagas. Similarly, Martina Navratilova's series of tennis-related mysteries does not make her an RP, because she isn't engaging in any special literary pleading—she's just trying to make a buck. A good way to separate the celebrity novelists from the genuine RPs: Is their face on the cover or inside the back flap?

Book publishing can be cruel. Jimmy Carter's poetry didn't exactly start a fire. When celebrities descend from the ether and set finger to keyboard, the knives come out. "By no means is it surefire [sales]," says Simon & Schuster editor Chuck Adams, currently working on actor Michael Moriarty's first novel. "People assume they're ghosted by someone else. It's probably easier to get a line of cosmetics, a line of clothing, produced than to get a book well published."

Even magazines, less highbrow than poetry, have taken on a certain celebrity cachet. Condé Nast, which makes its editors into celebrities, also prefers to use celebrities as "contributing editors," lack of previous editorial experience being no impediment. Sandy Pittman, new-era socialite, mountain climber, friend of Martha, is a contributor to *Vogue,* covering the trials of the Central Park West set. The Dalai Lama edited an issue of French *Vogue* (it was hard to tell the difference). Roseanne thought she could help edit the most revered magazine in America. And now Francis Ford Coppola, fresh from casking a fine, not-too-fruity zinfandel, is funding a new New York literary publication.

The art world, as well, has been very, very good to the enterprising celebrity. Last fall, David Byrne, Richard Gere, Allen Ginsberg, and Karl Lagerfeld all exhibited photographs in New York galleries. Just last weekend, New York's Fahrenheit Club opened with a show of "tough guy" art by Stallone, James Dean, Charles Bronson, and Clive Barker. Muhammad Ali was showing separately in Stamford, Connecticut. Anthony Quinn, Jonathan Winters, Ron Wood, and Billy Dee Williams all like to work in oils when not contemplating the fade of their core careers. Tony Bennett—Anthony Benedetto to the art world—prefers pastels. But once you've hung a few exhibits, why stop there? The late Jerry Garcia's paintings are sold as ties and hotel-suite furnishings, David Bowie has moved from canvases into wallpaper patterns, and the brother of Princess Diana, Viscount Linley, offers a line of repro-antique furniture.

Moving in the opposite direction, superdealer Arne Glimcher continues his lateral shift into movie directing (*Mambo Kings, Just Cause*), and if he sells a few more Schnabels to Michael Ovitz while he's on the coast, well, there's nothing wrong with that. The next of the painter-director movies, meanwhile, is expected this fall, complete with a cast of near and actual RPs. Julian Schnabel's own directorial effort, *Build a Fort,* based on the life of Jean-Michel Basquiat, has not only Courtney Love and David Bowie acting but the director's daughter playing the first wife of the character based on Schnabel. Schnabel is played by Gary Oldman, who sang on Schnabel's 1995 country album. This film, like last year's *Johnny Mnemonic* and *Search and Destroy*—directed, respectively, by artists Robert Longo and David Salle—proves the new adage that hyphenates run in packs. *Mnemonic* featured Reeves and Rollins. *Search* had Hawke and photographer Dennis Hopper. Photographer Cindy Sherman, known for putting herself in a variety of movie-style poses, has finally decided to do it for real: *Office Killer,* about a serial murderer who works for a Manhattan magazine, starts shooting this week.

NOW FRANCIS FORD COPPOLA, FRESH FROM CASKING A FINE, NOT-TOO-FRUITY ZINFANDEL, IS FUNDING A NEW LITERARY PUBLICATION.

BUT REALLY, WHO CARES IF SAM SHEPARD AND Christopher Durang like to relax by appearing in movies or onstage? Who cares if Mickey Rourke tries his paw at boxing? The trend truly becomes alarming only when the let's-put-on-a-show mentality becomes pervasive enough to affect auditions for the most important job in the U.S. And it has. Four years ago, nearly one in five voters bought Ross Perot's line that a man with no experience in government was perfectly suited to run one. This year, Perot is back, taking the dilettante politico spot just vacated by wonkish magazine scion Steve Forbes. "When enough people ask you to give it serious consideration," Forbes seigneurially told *The New Republic* back when he was still weighing a run, "you have to give it serious consideration."

But politics is already more about name recognition than anything else. Think Sonny Bono, Fred Grandy, Steve Largent, J. C. Watts, or Fred Thompson, who parlayed a career as a Washington lawyer into a movie career playing lawyers and politicians into a Tennessee Senate seat. "Just because you play a frivolous character doesn't mean you are frivolous," insists the American Enterprise Institute's Norm Ornstein. Just ask Ronald Reagan.

The lure is unmistakable. Leonard Bernstein may have entertained the Black Panthers, but Charles Barkley, Barbra Streisand, and Alec Baldwin want to entertain the voters. Streisand, already a singer-songwriter-actress-director-producer, is reported to be gunning for the co-chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee, a stepping-stone to elected office—she could sing the national anthem at her own inauguration. Barkley's potential run for the Alabama governorship—something of an in-your-face replay of Bill Bradley—may be more than a glimmer in his eye. He has the money, the name recognition, the opinions. Even stock-car racing, an eighties refuge for movie RPs like Tom Cruise, Paul Newman, and the late Don Simpson, is getting in on the act: Richard Petty is running for secretary of the state of North Carolina this year and is considered plausible governor material.

GIVEN THAT NORTH CAROLINIANS HAVE SENT both Jesse Helms and Lauch Faircloth to Washington, who's to say Petty *wouldn't* be a step up? That's the problem with dismissing the RP phenomenon out of hand—some people can and do achieve awesome proficiency in multiple careers. Emma Thompson's win for best screenplay left a lot of people hoping she'd write another role for herself next year. Robbins has become one of the best actor-director-writers in Hollywood.

Everything Russell Simmons touches (rappers, streetwear, TV shows, models) turns to urban gold. Video-cum-movie director Spike Jonze has proved he's more than a skateboarding freak. And Ron Howard has so transcended Opie that his movie was nominated for an Academy Award, avoiding the TV hell that trapped would-be RP'ers Henry Winkler, Jerry Paris, and Anson Williams. Leon Botstein manages to run Bard College and conduct the American Symphony Orchestra, and helped the MacArthur Foundation run *Harper's* magazine.

There is something admirable about the desire to push your limits. Listen to the apologists. George Plimpton, for example. "If I did all those things like running out on a baseball field just to amuse myself, then that would be dilettantism," he says. "John McEnroe, the great tennis player [and sometime guitarist], has started an art gallery. I suppose you could call that dilettantish, but God bless him! You've got to start somewhere."

(continued on page 100)

O LUCKY MAN

SCENES FROM A LIFE THAT TURNED out to be different from what I expected.

It's summer in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. There is a little knot of very authentic-looking skinheads walking behind me as I browse on a shopping street at dusk. There is no one else on the sidewalk. As I turn to look into a hobby-shop window, the skinheads surround me. They look scary. "Say it," says their leader, a young man with boots and undressed suspenders.

What can they want me to say? What horrible, degrading skinhead thing can they want me to say here in this empty street in north Idaho?

"Say it," the young skinhead says again.

"Say what?" I ask in my most friendly, innocent voice.

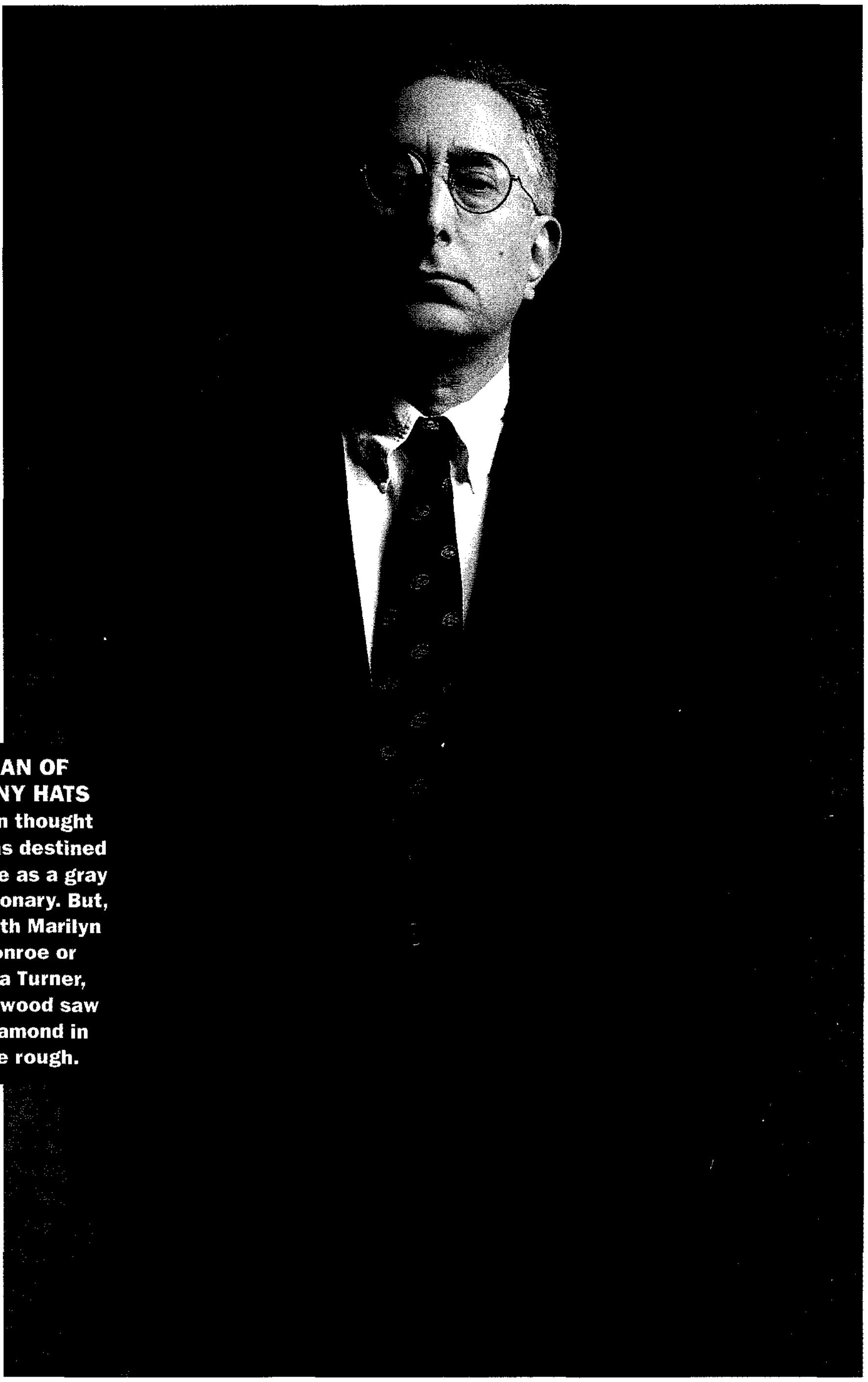
"Say your line from *Ferris Bueller's Day Off,*" he says. "Say 'Bueller, Bueller' or 'Anyone, anyone.' *Pulleeze.*"

"And I want an autograph," says another man, wearing an Iron Maiden T-shirt.

Or this: It's Christmastime in Manhattan. I am staying at the Women's National Republican Club on 51st Street, mostly because I cannot find a hotel room. I am trying to sleep, but some very loud young people in the ballroom on the floor below refuse to stop their party. I pull on my robe and schlep down to the room, where I see two couples necking furiously to mad, obsolete Pink Floyd. "Please stop this noise and go home," I say to them.

One of them breaks off his kiss and advances toward me. He looks furious, but then he recognizes me, and he says, "Hey, it's the guy from *Casper.* You're hilarious, man." Much better, they agree to leave.

Or try this one: It's about a year and a half ago. By some strange fate, I have been asked to audition to play a Nevada casino lawyer in the movie *Casino,* starring Robert De Niro and directed by Martin Scorsese. I have passed the first level, and now I am in the hallway of the Bever-



MAN OF MANY HATS Stein thought he was destined for life as a gray functionary. But, as with Marilyn Monroe or Lana Turner, Hollywood saw a diamond in the rough.

Actor, Professor, Pundit: The Accidental Making of a Renaissance Person

BY BEN STEIN

PHOTOGRAPH BY CLAUDIO VAZQUEZ
FOR *NEW YORK*

ly Wilshire Hotel, about to go in and read for, yes, De Niro and Scorsese. As I walk into the room, Scorsese greets me and says, "I'm a big fan. You always crack me up. I love your work."

"You're a big fan of *mine*?"

"Ever since *Ferris Bueller,*" he says. "Bobbie, you've got to see this guy. He's great."

I didn't get the part, but it was a memorable afternoon.

Or: I'm in Washington, at the Cannon House Office Building, testifying about securities-law reform before the Telecommunications and Finance Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee. A nasty congressman from Tennessee is giving me a hard time about my view that there should not be deregulation of commercial banks so as to allow them also to underwrite stocks and bonds. Congressman Ed Markey of Massachusetts, whom I know from other appearances before the subcommittee, jumps in to defend me. "The witness is not only a noted expert on securities issues but happens also to be one of the funniest character actors in America, so let's show some respect."

After the hearing, a young intern for the representative from Tennessee approaches me and says, "We'd just like to tell you that we loved you on *The Wonder Years,* and no matter what our boss says, you're great. Could I get your autograph for my little brother?"

Or, finally, this: My son and I are at a stoplight and the people in the next car, obviously USC students, roll down their windows and say, "Man, you were awesome on *The Wonder Years.*"

I beam at them and grin like an idiot and my son says, "Why did they do that, Daddy?"

"Why, maybe they think I'm famous, my boy," I say, still like an idiot.

"But you're only a little bit famous," says the 8-year-old wonder. "You're a character actor, not a leading man."

When I sit silently for a moment, he adds, "Well, you're still pretty famous."

I NEVER HAVE HAD AN ACTING LESSON. I never planned to be an actor. In fact, I really still do not consider myself an actor, as in a trained craftsman who can do Shakespeare and actually memorize a whole play and also remember where to stand and sit. That is far beyond me. I just have a few different characters buzzing around inside my skull, and I just play myself as one of those characters, serious or comic, lawyer or high-school science teacher, usually monotoned and nasal, because that's how I am in real life whenever the opportunity to display myself arises. I am almost precisely the same in front of my securities-law class, at Pepperdine Law School in Malibu, as I am on the set—except that I wear makeup on the set.

I had also never planned to work in Hollywood at all, in any capacity, as writer of screenplays or producer, or even to be here except as occasional tourist.

I also never planned to toil in the vineyard of securities law or write about financial scams, large and small, or teach about them in a law school by the shores of the mighty Pacific. It all just happened by the working-out of immutable fate, and a lot of it has to do with Richard M. Nixon, of permanent memory, who changed my life in many ways.

On a fall afternoon in 1965, in a wonderful sunny bedroom of an apartment at 380 Riverside Drive, I sat at a little maple desk and held my head in my hands while my girlfriend, Mary, looked at me pityingly. The problem was simply this: What would I do when I got out of Columbia a scant eight months later? I had no real ambition to do anything but have a halfway decent, prosperous life and not be trapped inside an office all day working on columns of figures, which seemed to be my fate as an economics student. What on earth would I do? What do adults do?

AFTER MY TESTIMONY, AN INTERN APPROACHED: "WE LOVED YOU ON 'THE WONDER YEARS'... NO MATTER WHAT OUR BOSS SAYS."

Luckily, I have never had to find out for very long.

On the advice of my brother-in-law, a securities lawyer at Stroock & Stroock & Lavan, I went to Yale Law School, which, he assured me, was a country club compared with his Harvard Law. In fact, it was better than that. After a rocky start, life there was close to paradise: Few difficult classes. Nonstop demonstrations against war, racism, sexism, the Socratic method, the indifference of the university. A terrified, complacent faculty who asked not much more than to be left alone. Good meals served on tablecloths by liveried waiters. Lots of great movies. The Russ Meyer Film Festival. Yours truly telling a teacher that if he did not stop badgering us with his pointless questions I would take off my clothes in class and recite the names of the Vietnam War dead. Balmy afternoons walking across the shady, neo-Gothic campus.

I took courses in corporate finance from geniuses like Tobin and Wallich. By the grace of God, I also got to take film classes under the great Stanley Kauffmann at the Yale School of Drama, and I knew that film was a better way than law.

But how to get into it? I knew no one in Hollywood, no one in a studio. Plus, I had no skills—or so I thought. Instead of going to Hollywood, I went to work as a trial lawyer in Washington, D.C.—probably the worst job on earth (too much tension, conflict, deadline pressure, feigned passion for a subject I did not give a damn about). I worked for the Federal Trade Commission, in a dreary annex where winos urinated against the wall of the lobby as we bureaucrats walked in to do our putatively vital tasks. It would have made Kafka weep. It made me feel as if my life were over. I also taught a class in film, part-time, at American University in Washington, D.C. I loved the class and the students loved me. In the event, I soon quit trial law to save my health, but I continued to teach.

I taught at the University of California at Santa Cruz, about film and about law. It was a great life, working as a hippie Republican at the exact zenith of the hippie era at the epicenter of hippiedom. Still, filmwise, I was just on the outside looking in. Teaching about film is nice, but it has as little to do with working in film as studying military history has to do with leading a tank assault.

It was Richard Nixon's connections that got me in the door, so to speak. In 1973, I went to work as a speechwriter for Nixon in his waning days as president. My father, Herbert Stein, the economist, was already there as chairman of the President's Council of Economic Advisers. Through my father and through my own work, I met William Safire, who had just left the Nixon White House to work for the New York *Times.* At one of Safire's famous dinners to break the fast at Yom Kippur, in 1973, I met an executive of Warner named Ed Bleier. Ed was (and is) high up in the TV division. I asked him why he did not remake *Rebel Without a Cause* as a TV movie. He liked the idea and put me in touch with a young associate of his named Steven Greene to discuss it. We did discuss it. Nothing came of it on the screen, but Steven and I became friends.

Fast-forward: Nixon leaves office. I left the Ford White House and moved to New York to write a column for the *Wall Street Journal* about modern culture. I met Norman Lear, visited Hollywood, liked it a lot. Got a contract to write a book about the political leanings of Hollywood. Moved to Hollywood. Did some tiny consulting and writing for Norman Lear. Got into writing and selling screenplays at a frantic pace. Wrote and sold novels and

Photograph, second from top, by Photofest.

ABC NEWS
LOS ANGELES

THE CHARACTER ISSUE
From top: To play the professor in *Ferris Bueller*, all Stein had to do was act naturally; with Jim Carrey in *The Mask*; the real Stein with the real Richard Nixon; Stein as pundit, with Yeltsin.

nonfiction books. Wrote a column for the late, lamented *Herald-Examiner* and King Features. Had a few triumphs but also terrible disappointments as a screenwriter. Worked at producing, which was extremely frustrating. Schmoozing studio executives to get deals was just not my idea of a life's work.

Then, in 1984, my life took a turn. Management of an investment trust of which I was a tiny stockholder tried to do something terrible to us tiny stockholders. I fought back, studying the law for endless hours, filing objections with the SEC, generally acting as a minuscule, self-interested Ralph Nader against some rich guys trying to loot some small guys. I had some success at blocking the deal and liked the sense of power and righteousness that it gave me. In no time at all, I was studying leveraged buyouts, shady financing, breaches of fiduciary duty, excoriating the power players like John Kluge and, above all, the master manipulator, Michael Robert Milken.

But in 1985, my life took still another turn, the kind that gets knots of hearing-impaired kids to stop me at Union Station in Washington, D.C., and ask in sign language for autographs and photos.

Steven Greene had introduced me to a fantastically well regarded casting guru named Michael Chinich. Chinich had become a high official of Universal. One day, while we were discussing a script at the Universal commissary, we were joined by Artie Linson, a hot producer who had just made *Fast Times at Ridgemont High*. He heard me talk, loved my voice, and whispered a few words to Michael Chinich. A few days later, I played the manager of an Army-surplus store in the sequel to *Fast Times*, an underappreciated movie called *The Wild Life*. The day came and went and I thought nothing of it. The movie was well reviewed but not a hit.

A few months later, lightning struck in my little life: Chinich became head of John Hughes's production company. He introduced me to John Hughes. Chinich and Hughes thought I had a funny voice. They asked me if I would care to read the attendance roll of a high-school class off-camera for a movie they were making. It had a strange title: *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*. On the appointed day, in November 1985, I reported to Stage 15 at Paramount to do my little bit.

When I started to read the roll off-camera, the students laughed so hard at my voice—somehow, in its bored, monotonous, inwardly seething timbre, the perfect voice of the teacher, the perfect voice of the self-imprisoned adult—that John Hughes did something spontaneous and wonderful. He put me on camera, in the classroom with my students, and had me take the role and say the name Bueller over and over again. Hughes knew that I taught in real life, at Pepperdine. He asked me to ad-lib ten minutes of teaching about something I was interested in while he filmed the students' reaction.

Because I am an economist by training, because supply-side economics was a big subject in my family (my father invented the term *supply-side*), I "taught" my student extras for about ten minutes about supply-side, the Laffer Curve, how George Bush had called it "voodoo economics," and even drew a graph showing what supply-side meant. Frankly, I thought my analysis was excellent and that my student extras might have actually learned something from my short lecture.

As I was lecturing, the nonworking performers, the crew, everyone on the set gathered around the perimeter of the mock classroom and stared. When I finished, they burst into applause. Matthew Broderick shook my hand and asked me if I had considered acting on Broadway, or maybe I already did. John Hughes laughed madly and shook my hand.

"You did it, my boy," said Michael Chinich. "You're on the map."

It would be wonderful if I could say I planned it, or worked on it, or did anything at all to deserve it. But what the camera recorded was just my own standard, lifelong weirdness, and it happened to resonate with the mass audience. Blind luck. Just, as Jerzy Kozinski might have said, *being there*.

The movie was a hit. Moviegoers started asking for my autograph in Westwood on the night of the premiere. Since then, I have done other acting things: I was a recurring character on *The Wonder Years* for three seasons as the nutty science teacher. I was a recurring academic character on *Charles in Charge* and have appeared in a dozen or more other TV shows, including my favorite of all time, *Married With Children*, as an angel in a chicken suit.

I played the airline passenger who drove Nicolas Cage crazy in *Honeymoon in Vegas* and the shrink to Jim Carrey in *The Mask* and the lawyer who turned over the haunted castle to Cathy Moriarty in *Casper* and, in *Richie Rich*, Richie's nutty teacher. I often play a voice in cartoons. I have also played in a number of commercials (most recently an ad for the Jackie Chan movie *Rumble in the Bronx*), although nowhere near as many as I would like to.

At the same time, I have become a fairly well known spokesman for shareholders’ rights, writing an extremely large number of words in *Barrons, New York,* and elsewhere about scandalous behavior at a variety of companies, many connected in some way with Drexel. I appear at depositions, analyze evidence, and help states and the federal government recover money. For every day I spend acting, I spend at least five reading and writing about securities fraud and junk-bond default rates, including a few days spent reading interminable law-review articles about law and economics, an arcane subject guaranteed to induce slumber.

I also write a great deal about my life with my son—taking him to north Idaho to ski and boat, teaching him about the battle of the Kursk Salient in World War II (look it up) and about my life as a father and traveler—in *The American Spectator.*

I do a lot of different things, and when I am able to do them, I love them a lot. It’s not a burden to do all of these things (except for reading about law and economics). It’s a pleasure.

What’s great about being a well-known (but not *that* well-known, because after all, I am writing this about me, not having Joan Didion write it about me) character actor is a series of qualities you never learn about in law school.

It’s a straight shot of heroin right into the mainline of ego. There is no feeling, not sex, not money, not drugs, that compares with the ego boost that comes from being in front of the camera, having 6- to 12-year-old kids ask for your autograph, having their parents tell you that they still watch *Ferris Bueller* at least twice a year and that my part makes them laugh out loud. Even former players in Milken’s circle have told me that in the junk “trading” room, they used to imitate me all the time. Even really great writers, hugely well paid lawyers, potentates of finance, do not get recognized as much as a medium-grade character actor like *moi.* For a guy who needs a fair amount of reinforcement about his entitlement to daily life, it’s just what the doctor ordered. (Of course, the truly well adjusted personality needs no cheap flattery or doctor or prescription.)

To be a well-known actor—even one who is not particularly well paid—is to be taken out of anonymity and made into a part of virtually every American family. You are never lonely anywhere you are when you have done parts as well known as Mr. Cantwell on *The Wonder Years.* For a man like me, who thought that his destiny was to spend his life in a broom-closet-size office in an annex to the Federal Trade Commission, having a certain kind of character now generally known in Hollywood as “the Ben Stein type,” to have a character on *Duckman* who actually has my name—that’s not a lot of money, but it’s a lifeline out of the dim bureaucratic obscurity that I always feared waited for me.

Acting is also great work as process. It’s incredibly easy—at least for me, since I never do anything very difficult. (I have only had to do one stunt, on *Live Shot,* a canceled show about a TV station—a fight with another actor, and I cracked a rib doing that.) I just play myself, and I can memorize lines very quickly—if there are not too many of them. There is always good food on the set at lunch. In fact, the two best lunches I have ever had were on the set of a movie called *North* and on the set of a soon-to-be-released CD-ROM movie called *Toonstruck.* Plus, unlike most people at work, people on sets are almost always in a great mood. They should be: They are being paid well largely for work they would do even if they were not paid at all. No one in America laughs more or has a better time than actors doing voice work in cartoons. Men and women who work in offices or shops or factories would simply not believe how easy or how happy the atmosphere is in voice work. Even within the happy world of paid acting, voice work is the highest level of bliss.

SOME MAY CALL THIS THE LIFE OF A RENAISSANCE MAN, BUT IT’S NOT. I HAVE LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF SCIENCE OR ART, AND DON’T ASPIRE TO.

WHAT’S GREAT ABOUT BEING A SECURITIES-law maven and small-stockholders’ advocate is that it’s intellectually challenging. The days I spend reading those mind-numbing law-review articles are like grueling cerebral calisthenics. I feel as if I am earning my braino keep by doing it, burnishing my braino credentials. It’s also a day job with a requisite amount of dignity and one that justifies my wearing a suit and tie, which I would do anyway.

The good part about writing articles is getting to “smear my personality around,” as my helpful mom says, without having to go through a battery of editors or book salesmen or jealous, small-minded critics. And the good part about writing books and screenplays is that I can express longer thoughts and get paid a little more and have a party favor to pass out on those rare occasions when I am invited to parties.

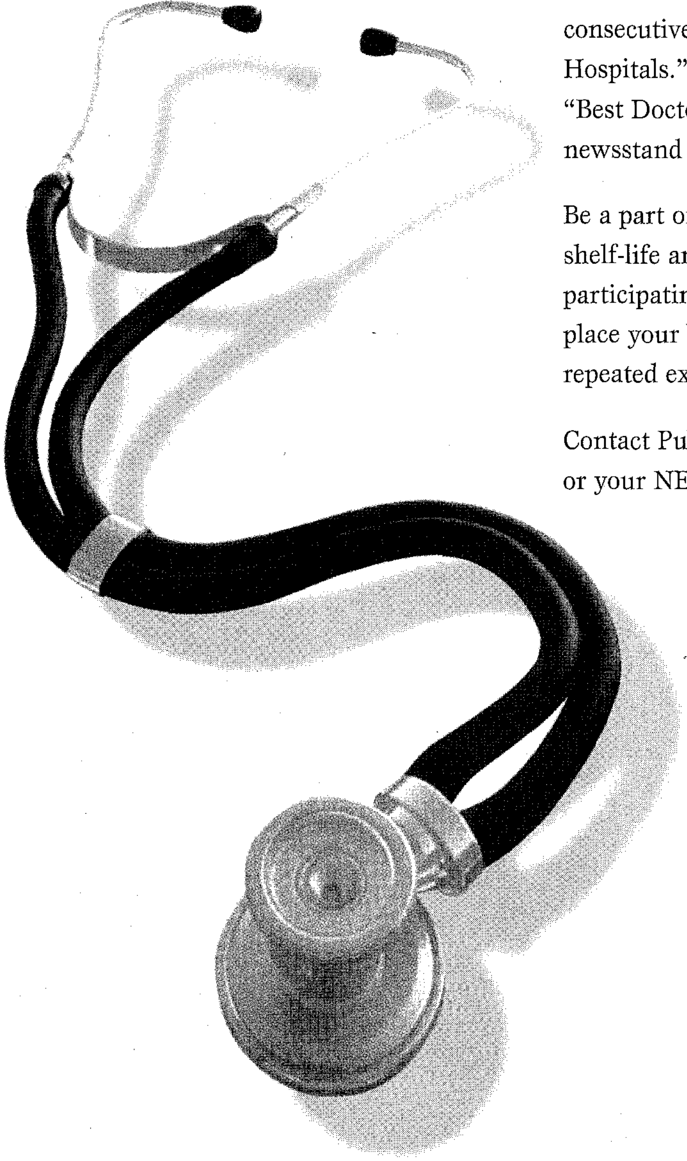
Do I ever get in my own way? Rarely. Certainly the casting agents—who haven’t been calling much for a few weeks, shudder, shiver—do not care at all that I teach securities law. *The American Spectator* is indifferent to my acting. Once in a while, a lawyer from the other side will mention that I am an actor in an effort to make me seem like less of an expert on securities law. It does not work. Juries love me precisely because they recognize me, have had a good time laughing at my character, and sincerely believe that I am their friend because I play such a funny guy on screen. A lawyer for the other side in a case in Missouri told me two years ago that he had actually tested tapes of me in front of a practice jury and they had loved me—which gave them an incentive to settle the case. Just two weeks ago, a jury in Northern California laughed and giggled and winked at me as I left the stand. The lawyer for the other side said they were laughing at my testimony, but they were really laughing at my characters on TV and in movies. (I could hear them whispering “Bueller, Bueller,” as I passed by them.) They didn’t think less of me. They liked me because I was part of the mass-culture family.

Now, some may call this the life of a Renaissance man. It really isn’t, because I have little knowledge of science or music or art and don’t aspire to. Plus, I do not do anything at a particularly high level of virtuosity (except explain financial fraud, at which I am a terror). I cannot be compared in terms of my “artistic” work with anyone who has real talent or energy, at least not compared favorably. The range of my work is more the sign of a restless personality who has a lot of bills to pay than of compelling artistic talent. American Express and MasterCard demand a high level of activity, and so does the company that lent me money for my house. They would be just as happy if I were a regular on *Seinfeld,* or the creator of a cartoon, but I would still feel obliged to write if I were sufficiently outraged about a securities scam, for instance, or if I saw my son doing something especially cute, like dressing up as Richard Nixon for a Presidents’ Day show at his school last February.

Sometimes I feel bad that I am not a regular on *Friends* or *Seinfeld,* or getting starring roles in pictures like Rick Moranis (a real actor), but then I pull myself together and get to the bottom line: It is so wonderful to be out of that office at the FTC where the winos urinated against the wall of the lobby, to be a nationally known funny guy just for being me, just to have gotten on camera without any acting lessons or any time spent waiting tables, that I really have nothing to complain about. I’m not a Renaissance Man. I’m just a very lucky man—so far.

BEST
Doctors in New York

Special Issue



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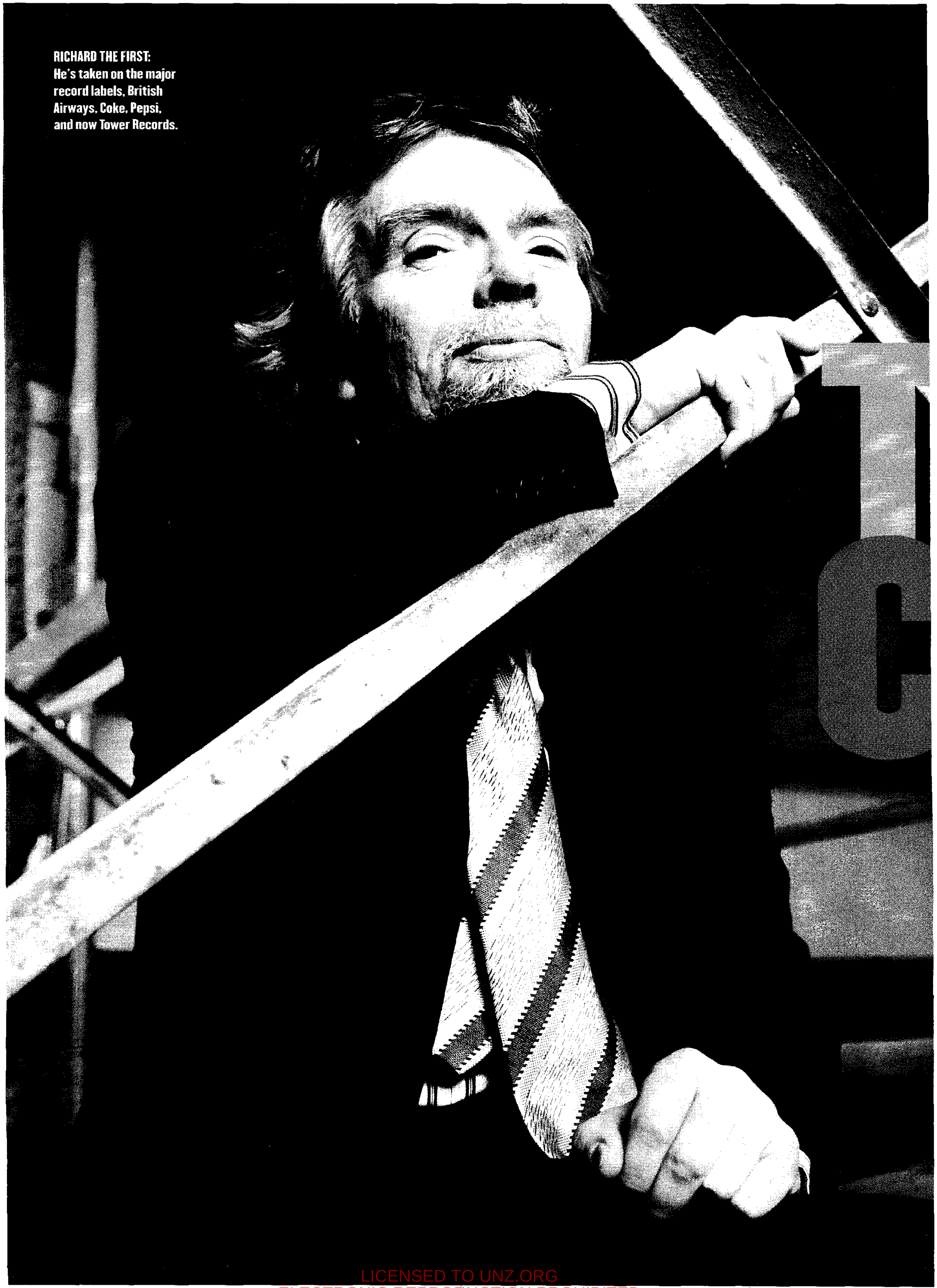


RICHARD THE FIRST: He's taken on the major record labels, British Airways, Coke, Pepsi, and now Tower Records.

SHAGGY, SWASHBUCKLING BRITISH ENTREPRENEUR RICHARD BRANSON IS OPENING THE WORLD'S LARGEST RECORD STORE IN TIMES SQUARE THIS MONTH. IT'S ONLY THE FIRST STEP IN HIS MADLY AUDACIOUS PLAN TO CONQUER AMERICA. BY ALEX WILLIAMS

HE VIRGIN ONQUEST

"*JANE FONDER* AND MYSELF WERE joint guests of honor," Virgin founder and chairman Richard Branson is saying, "and she was there with her husband, Mr. Turner, and I was asked to make a little speech, which I did. I recounted a story: I was circumcised quite old, at 18 rather than whatever it is, 1. The only problem was that the day after I was circumcised, I watched the film *Barbareller* and I split all my stitches."

The employees and hangers-on gathered around Branson at a long table at a midtown Italian restaurant just about split their stitches, too.

"She loved it," he continues. "I'm not sure about Mr. Turner." In fact, it sounds like a story Turner would tell. Branson, the closest English equivalent of Jane Fonda's husband, turns to the waiter and orders a second espresso: "I'm on jet-lag time," he says.

The table is organized in the style of Leonardo's *Last Supper,* with Branson, appropriately shaggy and bearded, holding forth from the Christ position. As he speaks, the disciples crowd in, offering hypnotized, uncontrollable laughter as supplication.

Branson's enterprise is more cult than company. Virgin employees share an ideology: irreverence as warfare. It's Abbie Hoffman crossed with Sun Tzu, an approach that employees ritually call "the Virgin way." Risks are taken lightly. Competitors are laughed at. Business is treated almost as a practical joke.

But the charisma that's transfixed England, swayed Europe, piqued Asia, and all but zombified this dinner table has barely trickled into America. Branson, like soccer, is big everywhere but here. That might change. With the impending opening of Virgin's Times Square record store, the largest record store in the world, the Virgin way is coming to America, and so is Branson.

Virgin Megastores are a tourist draw in twelve countries, and the colossal, three-story Times Square site will be the sixth Megastore in America (California already has five) and the first of three planned in New York—all located on Broadway, the metaphorical import keenly noted.

The Megastores will serve as temples to the maverick genius of the 45-year-old Branson himself, and they'll provide the company name recognition to fuel expanded Virgin Atlantic Airways service to the U.S. and more American Megastores, as well as Branson's upcoming cola and vodka lines, for which this most American of Brits has no small ambitions.

"Virgin in America obviously has a hell of a long way to go, but around the

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUDSON BAKER
FOR *NEW YORK*

rest of the world, we have name recognition," he says. In Japan, of the foreign brand names, Coke is No. 1, Virgin is No. 5. In France, Virgin is picked as the brand name of the next century. We have a chance at giving Coke a run for their money in a lot of countries.

"New York," he says, "will never know what hit them."

THOUGH BRANSON IS CAPABLE OF PLAYING the diffident, accommodating businessman, his more typical mode is that of the buccaneer. His has been an almost teenage life, a life lived as if without consequence. There have been, literally, parachute free falls in which he pulled the wrong cord but came out smiling, and this has been true, to an uncanny degree, in his businesses too.

Branson is continually creating his own hagiography. Receiving an award from Ivana Trump, he gave her a signature greeting, hoisting her up in his arms and flipping her over. While staying at the Mexican villa of financier Sir James Goldsmith, he pushed Goldsmith into his own backyard pool, quickly scuttling his visit.

The cartoon-pirate persona has worked in England for particularly British reasons. "There's this generation of post-sixties entrepreneurs, like Tony Elliott, who launched *Time Out,* and they're pre-Thatcher, which is very significant, because there's a loathing of Thatcher entrepreneurs who made it when others did not and flaunted it. They've retained something of the optimism and naïveté," Gilbert Adair, a writer for the *Sunday Times,* says.

"There are these traditions in British public schools," adds Branson's friend Jonathan Gems, now a Hollywood screenwriter. "The head boy is allowed to keep a goat, for instance. And there's always been a tradition of pranks. Pranks are considered rather good form. They're considered upper-class. Where Richard is different is that he carried on doing pranks after he left school. Usually, schoolboys grow up."

"THE FAMOUS COKE SIGN," SAYS BRANSON, with no particular respect. He's riding in a Lincoln Town Car down Broadway toward the Bertelsmann Building on 45th Street, where the Virgin Megastore is three weeks from opening. On the face of the building, 3,400 feet of red neon tubing form the graffito-jagged Virgin logo. Next to it will shine the Virgin Cola sign, directly across from that famous Coke sign. Branson likes the placement.

Machines will dispense Virgin Cola outside the doors of the 75,000-square-foot megastore. The store will have 1,000 listening stations, and books, and software, and marble columns and frescoes. Branson admits that "the retail music industry is in dire straits." But, as he's just told CNN, "create the best in anything, and there's usually a market for it."

Time To Fly
atlantic
Virgin

The three-story Virgin Megastore will have 1,000 listening stations.

Unlike with air travel and brokerage service, however, there's only so much improvement you can bring to cola and vodka. Few cola purists can actually pick out the essence of citrus in Pepsi, or vanilla in Coke. Success here will hinge on price and, more important, personality. Thanks to Branson, and maybe a little to Sid Vicious, Virgin possesses the hormonal brand identity that Coke and Pepsi spend so desperately to build. Where Virgin Cola is sold alongside Coke and Pepsi in England, Branson says, the cheaper Virgin outsells Pepsi and accounts for 25 to 35 percent of total U.K. sales.

Indeed, his empire, with $3 billion in annual revenues, spreads implacably, business building upon business. Which made Branson's sale of his record company to Thorn EMI three years ago all the more shocking. By 1992, Virgin Records had grown to include the Rolling Stones and Janet Jackson. The price tag was $1 billion. "You have to cash in your chips at some point," Branson said then. This huge infusion allowed him to make a major push against British Airways for trans-Atlantic service, which he had already pierced by offering in-flight massages and manicures, plus improved economy-class service featuring personal video screens with movies people actually might want to watch (*Smoke, Mighty Aphrodite*), before which passengers were treated to free ice cream. He also had the money to stretch out into areas that were till then un-Virginized, shaking up the City—London's Wall Street—with Virgin Direct, Branson's popular Schwab-like discount brokerage.

At this point, he says, there's no telling how far Virgin might stretch. There have been Virgin condoms. There have been misfires, like Virgin personal computers. And so far, Virgin births and funerals are still in the joke stage. "Over the years, we started the record business, we had an artist, we built a shop to sell the artist's products in, we built an export company, video companies, editing suites," Branson says. He owns a radio station in Britain. "Every second of the day, there are 6 million people getting the name Virgin. You know, with Virgin we have this wonderful advantage: We have the record shops, the airlines, the Chunnel trains—quite a strong reputation in a whole broad area. Whereas Coke is just a drink." He shrugs. "There are some synergies."

THE MAN AT THE CENTER OF WHAT MIGHT BE called the Branson Family was raised the son of a dashing but underearning barrister father and a strikingly Nordic stewardess mother. The family was perpetually strapped but culturally posh, dotted with minor eccentrics like Richard's great-uncle Jim, who was written up in a magazine for eating hay. Richard attended Stowe, a reformist public school, and while there helped turn a penniless student magazine called *Student* into one that featured writing by the likes of John LeCarre and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Not that Branson, or *Student,* was terribly hip for its day. In fact, the one way in which Richard, for years a "hippie entrepreneur," ever seemed to channel the sixties was in his belief in the happening, the

Previous page; styling by Stefan Campbell for Marek; grooming by Guy Laurent for Susan Price; suit by Giorgio Armani, shirt and tie by Vivienne Westwood. Photograph: this page, Greg Miller.

BRANSON'S OPERATING STYLE IS ABBIE HOFFMAN CROSSED WITH SUN TZU.

conviction that if enough people and energy were stuffed into a room, something significant would just *occur.* Branson himself was always the energy.

"Richard was just the guy who would make the party go," recalls Jonathan Gems. "We were trying to get people to work on the magazine even though we didn't have any money, so we tried to create this party atmosphere, and people are always looking for excitement, looking for something better in their lives. Richard would buy wine, and we needed bait, so he would invite these pretty young girls over to my basement. Richard was energetic and open at a time when that was very uncool."

Virgin Records was born of a mail-order-record business born in the ad pages of *Student,* fathered by Branson's calculating impetuosity. By 1971, the famously nonmusical Branson had transformed the business into a record label, Virgin, the name a confession of inexperience. "The body that protects copyrights said they wouldn't let us register. They thought the name was rude," he laughs. Virgin, headquartered in a crash pad near London's Connaught Square, had its first No. 1 record within two years, the dense instrumental "Tubular Bells" (*The Exorcist*'s theme song) by the lugubrious Mike Oldfield.

But it was the Sex Pistols who established Virgin's guerrilla cachet. By the summer of 1977, they were England's hottest band, but the punk pioneers had been dumped unceremoniously from their labels. At Virgin, Oldfield was over. So Branson scuttled his flower-child associations in one pen stroke.

Branson's relationship to the band buzzed with distortion, partly because of manager Malcolm McLaren's con-art-as-high-art aesthetic. Branson called the Pistols the next Rolling Stones. The Pistols called Branson a hippie profiteer. After one album, the next Stones were a noisy memory. Johnny quit. Sid died. McLaren crowed about "his" great rock-and-roll swindle and his triumph over the Virgin hypocrites, then reinvented himself as an artist. By 1984, McLaren was recording for Charisma records, a sub-label of Virgin. By that time, Virgin had Phil Collins.

BACK IN THE LINCOLN SITS THE VERY TIDY IAN Duffell, head of Virgin's retail division since coming over from HMV in 1987. Duffell, formerly of the seventies band Brotherhood of Man, is playing a sort of tauntingly arcane Name That Tune with Jeremy Pearce, a former lawyer and Sony A&R legend in his mid-forties who most recently helped discover Oasis. He has worked for Branson since this afternoon. Pearce, as Branson carefully puts it, has come onboard "to help me explore" the possibility of starting another record label. The noncompete clause with EMI has just expired.

"We'll decide the definite, I should think, in three or four months," he says. "I think the chances of us coming back again are more likely than not. The reason why is that the industry now has contracted to about five major players. I think there is room for a new major independent force. All the independent labels—Island, A&M, Chrysalis, Motown, Virgin, have been effectively gobbled up by the majors. The end result is that there are a lot of artists out there who have said, to me anyway, that they would like to have a smaller label with more concentration on their product. They don't want to be just one of thousands of artists in a massive company. But obviously, having done it once and built something quite special, I wouldn't want to do it again and not build something equally as special."

The car rolls past the empty block on 14th Street where a Union Square Megastore is planned (the third will be near Wall Street). Branson turns his head from the front seat. "You don't think we would have been right to do just the *one*?" he asks.

Duffell, the man charged with executing the three stores, looks horrified. "Just the *one*?" he says.

"I never said it, I never said it," says Branson, recoiling playfully.

The Lincoln stops outside Bowery Bar, where inside, along the back wall, sit some 40 Virgin employees, flight attendants and an assortment of retail people from the Sunset Boulevard Megastore.

Moët is ordered. Branson circles the tables, mane bobbing, stopping to give the random neck massage. He wrestles and hugs. Soon he is seated again. More bottles of Moët are ordered. Over the stereo system, a familiar pattern of notes turns heads. It's the Sex Pistols' "Pretty Vacant."

"Richard, do you know who this is?" asks his publicist, Lori Levin-Hyams, maternally.

"Is it *Offspring*?" he deadpans with BBC stiffness before grabbing a bottle and grandly serving every flute within range, as chords grind ominously. Branson locks into his best Johnny Rotten: "Weah sow prittayyyyy, ow sow prittayyy. . . ."

Last night, Branson was up late at Lucky Cheng's, the East Village club with the drag Asian waitresses. At one point, the father of two was wearing one of the waitperson's bras. The incident made the papers. Still, by 8:30, he was at breakfast with a reporter, talking lucidly about financing.

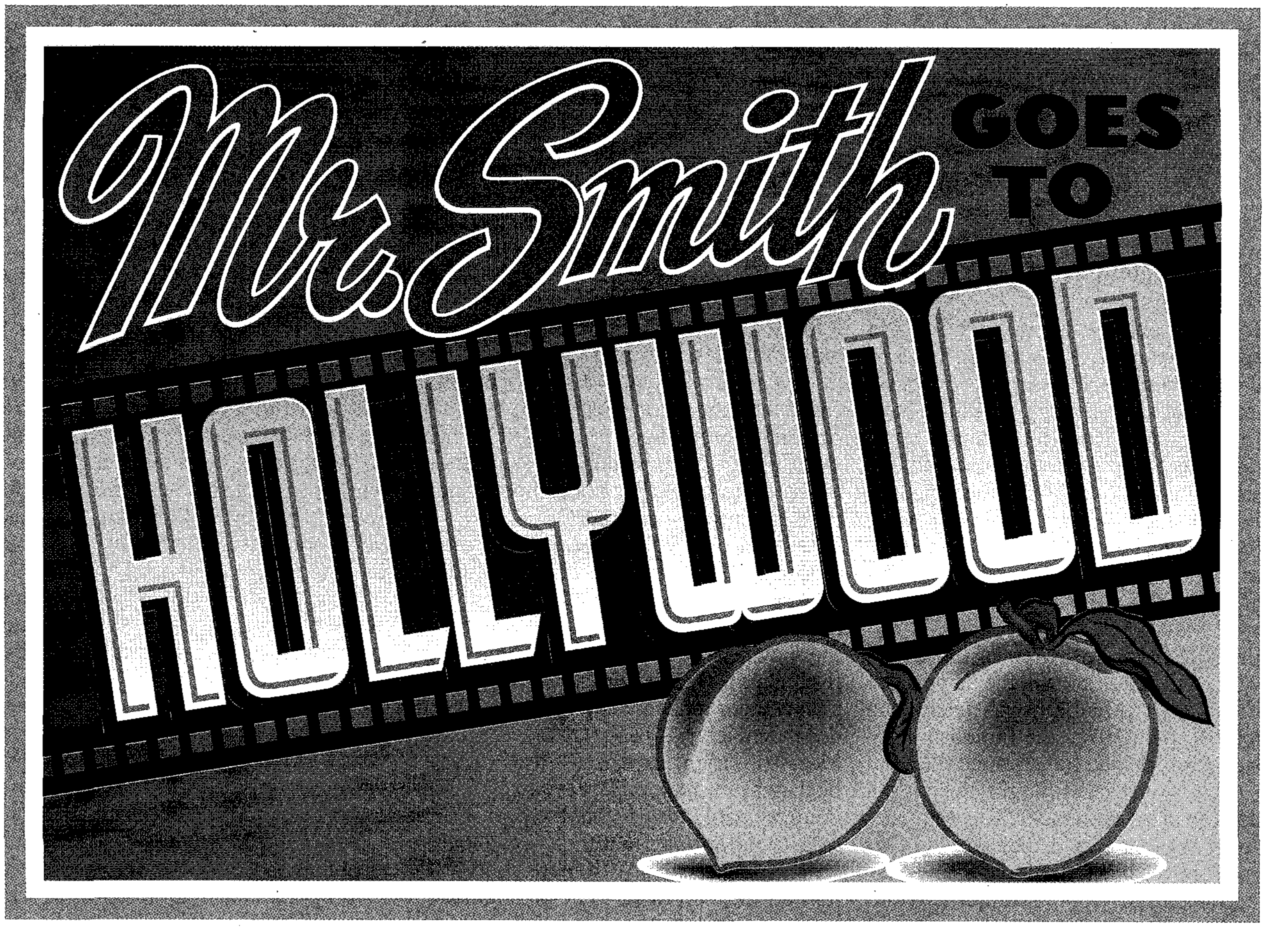
This daredevil-clown persona masks Branson's predatory and often litigious instincts. In 1969, he threatened to sue John Lennon when the Beatle reneged on a promised flexidisc recording to insert in *Student.* Lennon had been distracted by Yoko's miscarrying. Branson, however, insisted he had doubled the print run and commissioned pricey cover art. Lennon delivered—a brief audiotape of a faintly throbbing heartbeat. Branson let the matter drop. *Student* survived. More recently, Branson's "Dirty Tricks" fights with British Airways over the airline's alleged conspiracy to sink Virgin Atlantic by, among other charges, breaking into its computer system and stealing passengers have inspired four years of litigation. The parties settled last year, British Airways admitting some employees had gained improper access. (Virgin now turns its attention to a $975 million antitrust suit under way in America against the airline.)

Back at Bowery Bar, Branson wanders over to my table. "Can you be hypnotized? Let's make a bet."

Soon, my palms are pressed together over the table, Branson waving his hands over mine while locking eyes and prodding me about my exact mental state. He abruptly rises—"Bang, bang, bang, bang" —punctuating each *bang* with a snap of the fingers over the heads of the four others at the table. Just as abruptly, I'm sitting there, unhypnotized, except that Branson is pulling up his shirtsleeve, where my watch is fastened on his wrist, and I, apparently, am out a bottle of Veuve Cliquot.

Branson chuckles. Everyone chuckles. He might kill you, but you'll die laughing.

"I won $3 million from the head of Airbus with that," he says. ■



Mr. Smith GOES TO HOLLYWOOD

WHEREIN CHILDREN’S-BOOK ILLUSTRATOR LANE SMITH GOES FROM STYLISH CULT FIGURE TO DISNEY BIG BOY

“HEY, DO YOU WANT TO SEE some of the early sketches?” Lane Smith asks conspiratorially. “I’m not sure Disney even knows I have these.” All the characters Smith designed for Disney’s *James and the Giant Peach,* which opens April 12, technically belong to Disney/Cap Cities/ABC now, but their creator persists in hanging on to

BY BARBARA ENSOR

PHOTOGRAPH BY BERND AUERS
FOR *NEW YORK*

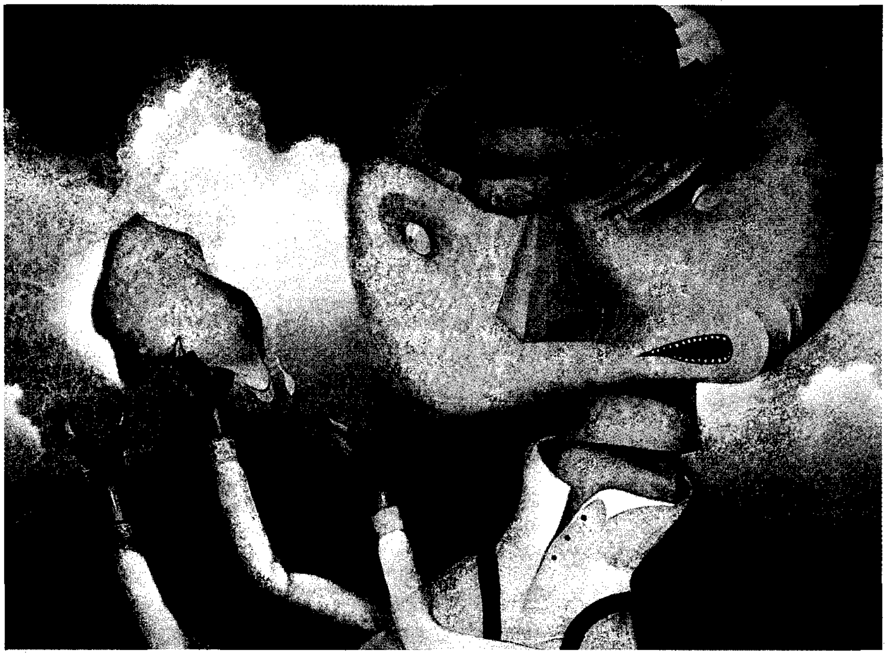
MAJOR
ING
RS
Smith

LANE'S WORLD

Above: Lane Smith in his studio. Opposite: Grasshopper, James, and Centipede, a few of the characters in *James and the Giant Peach.*

these early glimmerings of life. He pulls out a cardboard binder full of Xeroxed pencil drawings from a bookshelf in the toy-cluttered Flatiron-district studio a few blocks from his home. Centipede (his voice is supplied by Richard Dreyfuss) is Smith's favorite: "He's kind of a blowhard, the braggart of the group," he says with a laugh. Spider (Susan Sarandon) had to be reconfigured several times, eschewing a shawl and a Veronica Lake hairdo at one point in favor of go-go boots and penciled brows, which achieve a kind of Greta Garbo/Diana Rigg effect. Early Glowworm doodles show an aristocratic dowager in a well-cut tweed jacket. "I thought of her as someone you might see in a box seat at the opera," Smith explains. In the midst of researching exactly how a glowworm looks lit up, he had a better idea—attach a real lightbulb to her wormy tail.

That kind of goofy pop imagery fastened to richly textured realism is pure Smith. The illustrator has achieved cultish success in the absurdist school of children's literature—think Roz Chast, Maira Kalman: books so smart, ironic, and allusive that they appeal at least as much to adults as to children. His book *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* is revered among college kids for its nihilistic wit (a certain ugly duckling just grows up to be a *really* ugly duck). With *James,* Smith has imagined a much-beloved Roald Dahl classic without taking away any of its macabre oddities. The eccentric Paul Klee–meets–Tex Avery images floating around in his head all these years will soon be floating around in ours.



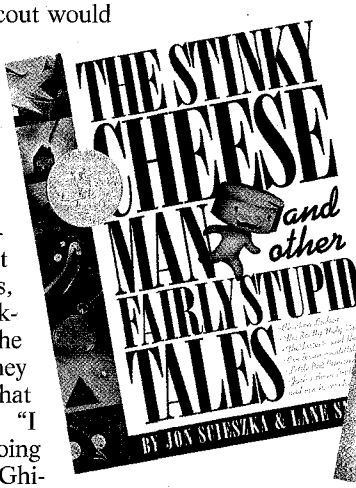
JUST PEACHY

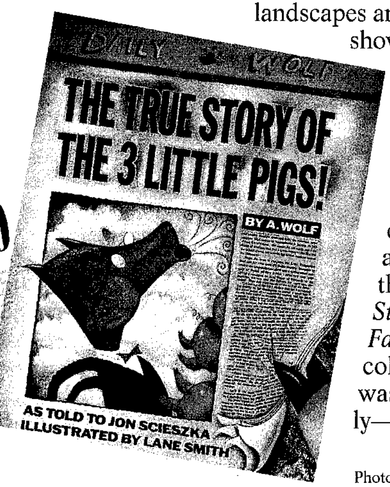
Above: Centipede, as rendered in Smith's newly illustrated book version of *James and the Giant Peach.* Below: Samples of the Smith *oeuvre.* Opposite page, top: The giant peach at sea; Ladybug, James, Miss Spider, and Grasshopper.

NOBODY COULD BE MORE SURprised to have had his work adopted by the mainstream than Smith himself: From the beginning, his inspirations were off-center. He credits his father Corkey, a retired accountant, with the dry, sometimes slightly mean-spirited sense of humor that surfaces so often in his work. "A Girl Scout would come to the door selling cookies and Dad would just say no and solemnly shut the door," he says. His mother was an avid collector of antiques and old bisque dolls, and that, he says, shaped him, too. "I always try to get some of that into my paintings," he says, "that sense of decay and crackle." When he told his parents he might want to be an artist, they were supportive. "They said that sounded cool," he recalls. "I think in their minds I was going to be one of those guys in Ghirardelli Square painting caricatures with the big heads and the little bodies."

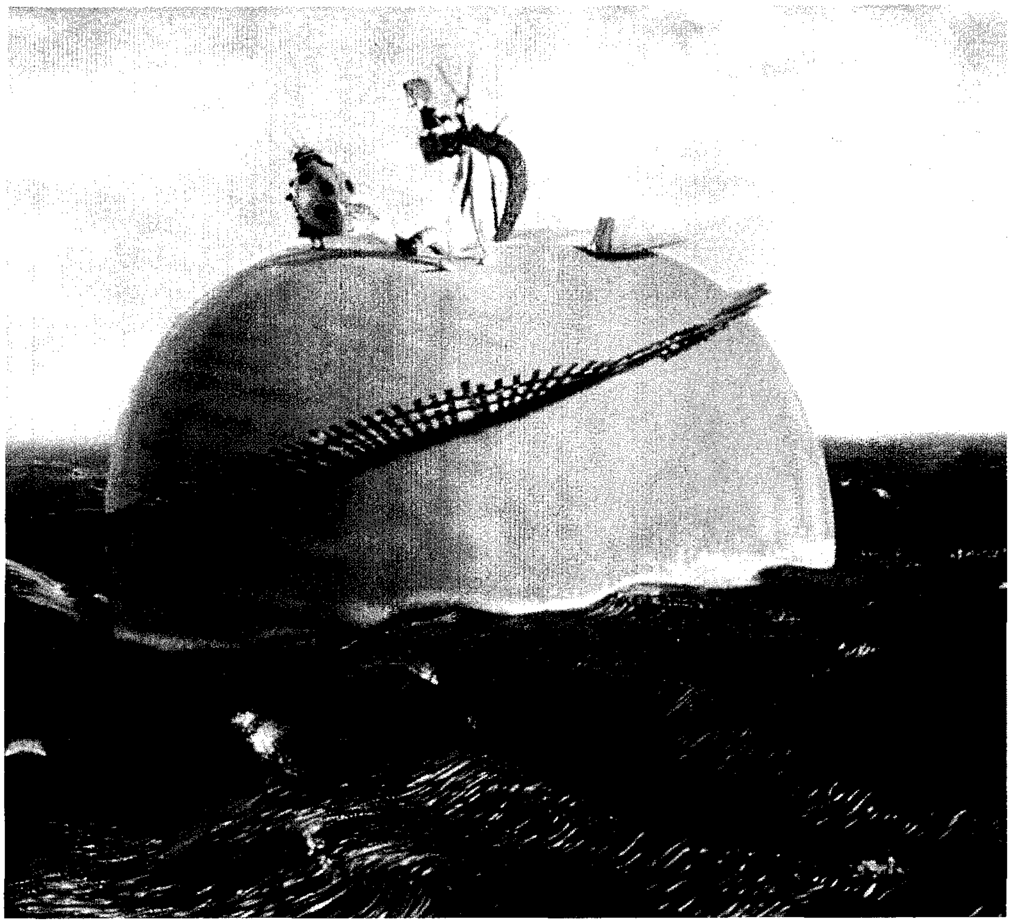
In 1984 Smith moved in with an art-school friend in New York and began dropping off his illustration portfolio at magazines. Molly Leach, who was a graphic designer at *Sport* at the time, recalls loving the odd images. "But everyone insisted the stuff was way too strange, and completely inappropriate for us to use," she recalls. Leach managed to assign Smith some editorial illustrations nonetheless, and the two became—and remain—an item. She began to work on his books, bringing to them the more free-form sensibility of magazine design. Letters would melt if they came into contact with an especially putrid smell, change colors for emphasis, even turn upside down. Margins, a sacred cow in children's books, shrank down to nothing at times.

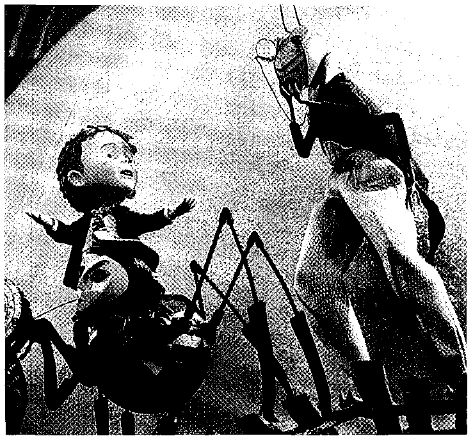
The books were risky in other ways as well. *Halloween ABC,* Smith's first children's endeavor—in which his illustrations accompanied poems by Eve Merriam—was banned from libraries around the country. Apparently, parents and teachers were less than pleased with pictures of devils dancing alongside lines like "Pass the pitchfork, please, Mephistopheles." Smith was ready to accept his fate as an underknown iconoclast of kiddie lit—"I thought that was the way it was going to go for me because my work is a little stylized and dark and strange," he says. "I always knew I was going to keep doing kids' books, but I figured I'd just be one of those guys who are always in trouble." The illustrations for a subsequent book, Jon Scieszka's *The True Story of the 3 Little Pigs!,* looked like they would confirm this prognosis. Scieszka's version of the tale was narrated from the wolf's point of view, and Smith's illustrations showed dead pigs' butts glistening against murky landscapes and a posse of outraged swine showing up with baseball bats to get their revenge. The book was turned down by almost every major publishing house before Viking picked it up. *Pigs* struck a strong us-against-them chord with children, though, and went on to sell more than a million copies. *The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales* (another collaboration with Scieszka) was entirely—and delightfully—devoid of big-eyed animals




DAILY WOLF
THE TRUE STORY OF THE 3 LITTLE PIGS!
BY A. WOLF
AS TOLD TO JON SCIESZKA
ILLUSTRATED BY LANE SMITH

Photographs by Bo Henry/Walt Disney Company.





and ponderous moral lessons, and won a 1993 Caldecott honor. "Kind of overnight, we were legitimate children's-books guys," Smith says, marveling still at the notion.

So imagine how he felt when the director Henry Selick, who was just finishing *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, first approached him about working on a Disney animated feature of *James and the Giant Peach*. At first, Smith was wary. "It seemed like something I ought to do for my career," he says, "but I was expecting kind of a painful process with a lot of compromises . . . I thought, you know, this could turn out to be a really bad thing where I'll commit for a year and I'll just keep getting stuff watered down." Happily, he and Selick got along fine. "It was great," Smith says. "Just about everything I did got into the film on the first pass."

Using a similar mixture of live-action footage piggybacked onto stop-motion animation with some computer-generated effects superimposed, *James* inherited not only *Nightmare*'s director but much of its production crew as well. Smith painted pivotal moments in the story—such as when James actually crawls inside the peach through a tunnel—as visual reference points for the movie. James, the only character who appears both as a live-action and an animated character, was designed to look like Paul Terry, the 10-year-old actor who portrays him. "In real life, he's actually kind of cute," Smith says, adding that because cute isn't something he renders particularly happily or well, Selick was ultimately called in to design him.

Smith also designed the animated bugs and insects, right down to their pleated skirts and antennae (sketching them from every imaginable angle proved so daunting that he occasionally consulted his worn copy of *How to Draw Donald Duck*—one that has his own decades-old attempts to master Donald's profile).

One week every month for about a year, Smith would fly to San Francisco to completely immerse himself in the complicated haberdashery requirements of the characters. All manner of insect antennae, whiskers, and eyelashes would be neatly lined up for him to sign off on by the movie's fabrications department. There were a million questions: Should there be a gap between Centipede's pants and his shoes that would be visible when he bent his knees? If so, then what color socks? Smith had to okay the size of eyeballs, the weight of Grasshopper's monocle chain, and the breadth of Earthworm's bow tie. Passions ran so high over these minute details that Smith and Selick actually got into a heated argument at one point over the precise thickness of Grasshopper's head hairs.

Liccy Dahl, 57, speaking from the house in Buckinghamshire where her late husband Roald wrote *James and the Giant Peach*, clearly adored the zealous attention given to the characters. "We visited the studios in San Francisco and they were shaving away at the chamois leather for Grasshopper's shoes to get them absolutely soft and supple," she says happily. Dahl hadn't had positive experiences with Hollywood in the past: *The Witches*, a 1990 Angelica Huston movie based on another Dahl children's book, was a source of bitter disappointment ("It was the only time I ever saw Roald cry publicly," she says). But this time around, she is delighted with the movie, which she feels beautifully captures the spirit of the book. "I shall never forget that first moment when I saw the bugs all come to life on the screen," she says. "[Roald] would so have loved that. Ladybug! You just want to hug her. And Grasshopper is pretty dear to my heart. I think he is a very wise creature, with a dry sense of humor. He probably enjoys wine and all the good things in life. He's a bit of a sybarite."

Her enthusiasm for Smith is equally intense. "Lane has got something that's extraordinary, the way he is able to put into their faces every ounce of their character," she says. And she's not alone in this assessment: Smith allows that he's batting around a few new movie ideas; he and Scieszka are already talking to film companies about a story starring the Stinky Cheese Man character. "Stinky's role would be expanded," Smith says. "By virtue of his smell, he would create more and more havoc as the movie progressed, like a snowball that rolls down a hill and gets bigger and bigger. He starts out as this little stinky character that no one likes," Smith continues—perhaps not altogether oblivious to the life-art parallels at work—"but eventually he ends up sabotaging the whole fairy-tale land." ■

Illustration opposite page, © 1996 from Disney's *James and the Giant Peach*, published by Disney Press.

BEST BETS

The best of all possible things to buy, see, and do in the best of all possible cities

BY CORKY POLLAN

Out of the Celluloid Closet

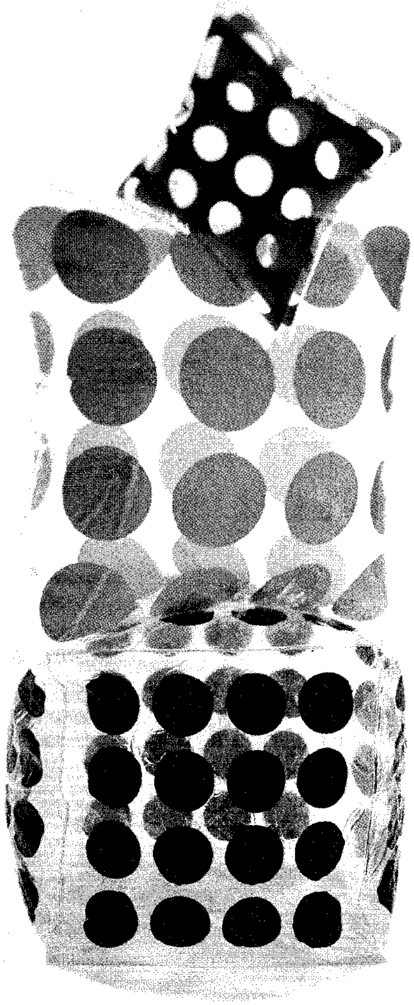
Adjectives that describe this season's prevailing look apply as well to these vintage pearlized-celluloid brooches and bracelets. They're pale, shiny, and boldly structured, but it was their clean lines that first appealed to Marion S. Mishkin, a jewelry designer–cum–lawyer. Mishkin has amassed a collection that dates from the thirties through the fifties. An infusion of finely ground clam shells accounts for their opalescence ($35 to $200).

BARNEYS NEW YORK/*Both locations*
J. GOLD/*1100 Madison Avenue, at 82nd Street/861-7350*
JIMMY'S/*150 East 72nd Street/628-6700*

My So-Called Room

On the evidence of most kids' clothing and furniture stores, the awkward years between 7 and 13 are anathema. Lisa Bogatin and Barry Lappin suffer no such hostility; the husband-and-wife team has assembled a mix of antique and contemporary furniture tailored to the in-between ages. Their second-story shop has the serendipity of a flea market (but not, alas, flea-market prices): Antique and vintage bed frames, dressers, armoires, and blanket chests are stashed everywhere. Amid the clutter are smart modular storage units and height-adjustable computer desks (from $32 for a pillow to $900 for a custom-made dresser to $1,975 for a mid-nineteenth-century bed frame).

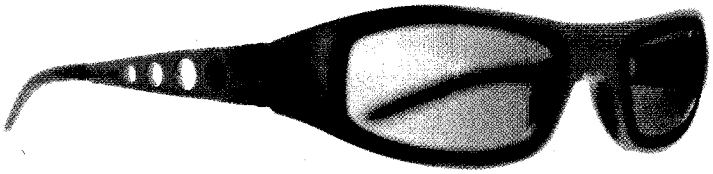
KID'S SUPPLY CO.: JR. HOMESTORE/*1325 Madison Avenue, near 93rd Street/426-1200*



Blow Pop

Zanotta Poltrone introduced the first inflatable PVC-plastic chair, Blow, to Italy in the sixties. Interest in blow-up furniture quickly crossed the Atlantic, and a New York company, Mass Art, Inc., began manufacturing cubes and pillows. They were fun, cheap, and designed to be disposable—so few have survived. Happily, a stash of polka-dotted relics recently surfaced in San Francisco. Steven Alan has returned them to the city of their domestic origin ($20 to $45).

STEVEN ALAN/*60 Wooster Street/334-6354*



Extreme Fashion

Comfort, protection, and fit are the salient qualities in assessing sunglasses. Bausch & Lomb's Killer Loops measure up. They're lightweight, offer 100 percent UV protection, and have silica hard-coated lenses and an anti-slip wrap design. The aerodynamic aluminum shades were designed for radical sports—surfing, hiking, mountain biking, and in-line skating—but their coolness is incidental ($139.99).

BLOOMINGDALE'S/*Main floor*
MACY'S/*Main floor*
SUNGLASS HUT/*All locations*

A catalogued archive of the past year of "Best Bets" is now available on *New York* Magazine Online on CompuServe, and readers may e-mail suggestions to 102404.2562@compuserve.com. To get online, call 800-535-1168 and ask for the *New York* Magazine representative. Current CompuServe users, *go* NYMAG.

SALES & BARGAINS LEONORE FLEISCHER

Au Bon Pan

Heavy metal: From a sale on stainless-steel cookware to pumping iron with a most-excellent cable-access fitness guru.

COOKWARE AND VACUUM CLEANERS are now on sale at this busy neighborhood housewares store: Calphalon (all with glass covers) nonstick 2-qt. sauté pan, retail $102, here $49.99; 3-qt. and 5-qt. stainless-steel sauté pans, retail $130 and $160, respectively, here $104 and $128. Le Creuset 6½-qt. oval oven, retail $220, here $164.99; 5½-qt. and 13-qt. round ovens, retail $200 and $320, respectively, here $129.99 and $249.99. All-Clad stainless-steel cookware: nonstick 10-in. covered casserole, retail $130, here $79.99; 10-in. open stir-fry or 8-in. frying pan, retail $80 and $62, respectively, here $49.99 and $29.99. Contemporary-design Miele vacuum cleaners, retail $400–$600, here $279–$479. *S. Feldman Housewares, Inc., 1304 Madison Ave., near 93rd St. (289-7367); A.E., Disc., M.C., V., checks accepted; all sales final; mail and phone orders accepted (out of state, call 800-359-8558); Mon.–Sat. 9 a.m.–6 p.m.; through 4/30.*

In Retro Specs

RETRO EYEGLASS FRAMES (MANY IMPORTED from France, Italy, and Germany) are on sale here. Women's frames, including many cat eyes, here $29.99; with stones, etching, trim, or other decoration, here $39.99. Every frame over $45 in the shop, including designer frames and famous-maker sunglasses, is also 20 percent off. *Empire State Hearing Aid Bureau, Inc., 25 W. 43rd St. (921-1666); A.E., Disc., M.C., V. accepted; Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Thurs. till 6 p.m., Sat. till 1 p.m.; through 4/30.*

Cool to Be Kind

BETWEEN NOW AND AUGUST 15, YOU CAN put your fur, shearling, wool, or leather garments in cold storage at only $20 each, and you won't have to take them out until next January 1. Cleaning, repairs, remodeling, relining, and other services on all furs are also available. *Harry Kirshner & Son, Inc., 307 Seventh Ave., near 28th St., fourth floor (243-4847); A.E., M.C., V., checks accepted; Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–6 p.m., Sat. till 5 p.m.*

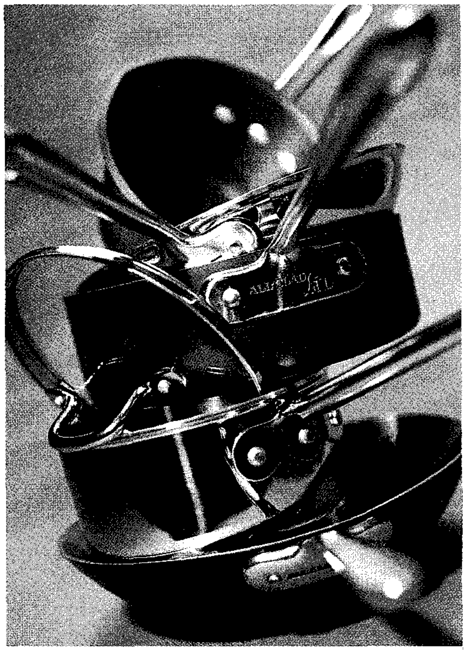
DO NOT PHONE: Send suggestions to Leonore Fleischer, *New York* Magazine, 755 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017-5998, six weeks before the sale. Only sales exclusive to "Sales & Bargains" and not previously advertised or published elsewhere will be considered.

Den of Slacks

THE INDIVIDUAL MAN IS OFFERING AT wholesale prices its new men's spring garments at roughly half the prices they fetch in uptown stores; the size range is 37–50R, 38–46S, and 40–50L. Suits of tropical-weight wool, here $279; of wool gabardine, here $299; silk-and-wool sport jackets, here $229; wool sport jackets, here $239; wool tropical-weight slacks, here $69.50; wool-gabardine slacks, here $79.50; single- and double-breasted tuxedos, here $279–$299. *The Individual Man, Ltd., 85 Fifth Ave., near 16th St., eighth floor (924-2157); A.E., Disc., M.C., V., checks accepted; exchanges possible on unaltered merchandise; Mon.–Fri. 8:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m., Sat. till 4 p.m.; while stock lasts.*

Old King Cole

THE R. V. COLE SHOWROOM SELLS FURNITURE made of solid wood, in contemporary designs. Now one- and few-of-a-kind floor samples are being cleared out: a large oak desk/conference table, was $1,250, now $899; solid-oak three-piece unit (desk with file drawer and keyboard pullout, 50½-in. hutch, and printer stand), was $1,000, now $799; solid-oak file cabinet, was $439, now $319; one-of-a-kind children's beds of solid ash or maple, were $800, now $499; solid-wood 36-by-70-in. bookshelves, was $559, now $459. *R. V. Cole, 114 E. 32nd St. (481-5566); M.C., V., checks accepted; all sales final; delivery arranged at additional cost; Mon.–Sat. 10 a.m.–6 p.m., Thurs. till 8 p.m., Sun. noon–5 p.m.; while stock lasts.*



All that glitters is not gold: Calphalon and All-Clad cookware from S. Feldman Housewares.

Childlife Preserve

THIS PHOTOGRAPHER SPECIALIZES IN CHILDren's pictures. Sessions for photos of as many as four people include your choice of color or black-and-white and will yield two 8-by-10-in. prints. Now she's offering 50 percent off: a simple sitting in her studio, was $325, now $165; a location shoot within the city, was $450, now $225; a location shoot outside the city (within a 50-mile radius), was $650, now $325, plus $150 additional for an assistant. A 30 percent deposit is required; balance to be paid on print approval. *Phone Childlife Photography for an appointment (633-1294); checks accepted; no credit cards; through 6/15.*

Take a Load Off

FOR THE MONTHS OF APRIL AND MAY, JUDY Myers, Ph.D., exercise physiologist, author, frequent TV guest, and host of the cable-access show *Losing Weight & Staying Fit,* is cutting in half her usual fee for a nutrition-and-fitness evaluation and a 30-day weight-loss program, was $350, now $175. Program includes one free 45-minute gym workout with free weights and machines. Consultation is one-on-one, held at Gold's Gym at Third Avenue and 91st Street. *Phone Judy Myers for an appointment (726-2535); checks accepted; no credit cards; through 5/31.* ■

Photograph by Wayne Simpson.

INCONSPICUOUS CONSUMPTION PAUL LUKAS

Toast Modernism

From Pepperidge Farm, a new, dedicated loaf for your morning meal—just don't try it raw!

Harvest White Toasting Bread
1-pound loaf (Pepperidge Farm, Inc.)

YOUR MORNING RITUALS MAY BE COFfee-driven, but mine center on toast. I don't know who first thought of heating a slice of bread until it got all brown and crispy (Merriam-Webster dates *toast* to the fifteenth century), but it sure was a fine idea. I just *love* toast—white toast, rye toast, raisin toast, wheat toast, toasted bagels, whatever. As a friend of mine once said—and I'm jealous not to have said it first—bread is just raw toast.

So you can understand how excited I was when Pepperidge Farm recently unveiled its Toasting Bread line. Imagine: bread *specifically made* for toasting. This sounded like the greatest thing since sli—uh, right. Still, toast is a very personal matter. One person's almost-burnt is another's just-right, and you may discard the heel slice while I savor it most of all. What factors would Pepperidge Farm consider in devising a toast-tailored loaf?

The main factor, it turns out, is heft. A slice of Toasting Bread is much thicker than your average slice, one result of which is that there are only ten Toasting Bread slices to a one-pound loaf, compared with sixteen slices in a loaf of conventional Pepperidge Farm white. Or, to take a more cynical view, at the typical rate of two slices per breakfast, Toasting Bread will have you running back to the store for another loaf three days sooner.

Pepperidge Farm corporate-communications vice-president Edie Anderson told me it's a bit more complex than that, however. "Toasting Bread is a specially formulated product," she explained, "not just another bread sliced thick." Anderson said the firm's market research shows toast consumers are hankering for precisely what Toasting Bread offers: a thicker, heavier slice that gets crunchier on the outside while staying squishy on the inside. When I asked whether consumers were allowed to use Toasting Bread for, say, making a sandwich, she said, "Absolutely—we don't mind at all." But in a moment of surprising candor, she later admitted that untoasted Toasting Bread "really doesn't have as full a flavor" as regular bread. She had fewer reservations when I asked whether Toasting Bread was suitable for feeding ducks.

Pepperidge Farm has been selling a thirteen-slice toasting version of its white bread since about 1970. But as a Pepperidge Farm fact sheet puts it, the new Toasting Bread represents the bakery's big push "to compete for more of the breakfast eating occasion." The three initial varieties—white, wheat, and seven-grain—were test-marketed last summer and launched nationally in December; they've now been joined by raisin-oat and cinnamon. The package wrapper and the firm's coupon advertising both attempt to liken the product to English muffins, but I'm afraid Toasting Bread has too uniform a texture to justify the comparison.

That said, Toasting Bread does make a decent batch of toast. I sometimes find it a bit *too* thick—two slices feel more like an entrée than like an appetizer—but the extra mass makes it great for dunking, if you're so inclined. Try as I may to focus on this product's practical utility, however, I keep coming back to the larger implications. Specifically, what does it mean when manufacturers begin marketing this sort of extreme compartmentalization of function? As another acquaintance of mine remarked when she first heard of Toasting Bread, what'll they think of next—Sniffing Glue? *(Pepperidge Farm, Inc., 595 Westport Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut 06851.)* ■

PEPPERIDGE FARM
TOASTS UP CRISPY OUTSIDE, TENDER INSIDE
TOASTING BREAD
Harvest White

Not intended for sandwiches.

SEND PRODUCTS, gadgets, promotional literature, and suggestions to Paul Lukas, *New York* Magazine, 755 Second Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017-5998. E-mail address: krazykat@pipeline.com.

Photograph by Wayne Simpson.

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BOOKS **WALTER KIRN**

Girls of the War Zones

William Vollmann's new book is a connoisseur's guide to danger, drinking, Third World poverty, and fallen women—Graham Greene, in bright purple.

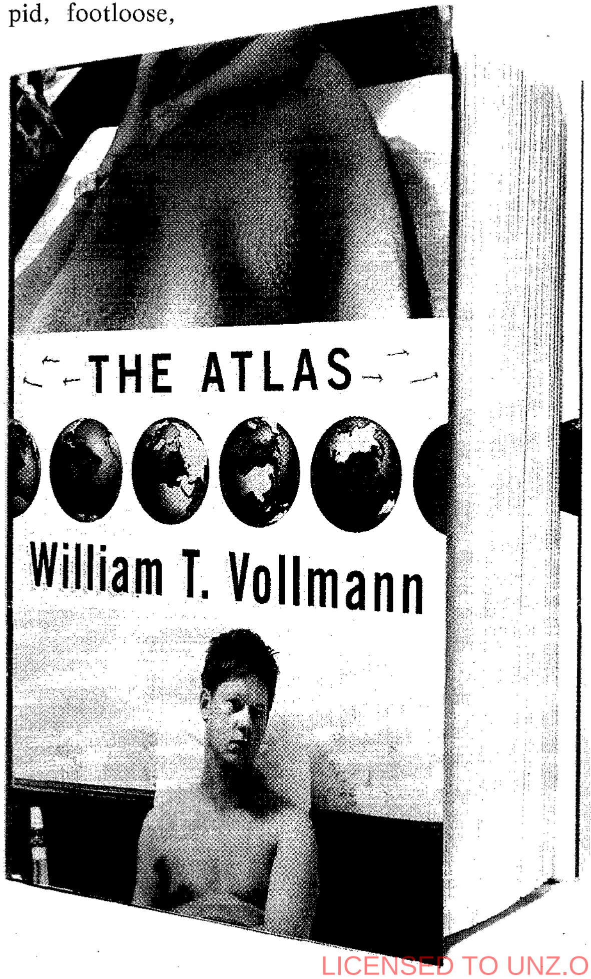
Vollmann is the literary traveler of the moment. But he sees the same things wherever he goes.

The Atlas

BY WILLIAM T. VOLLMANN
(Viking; 459 pages; $29.95)

WILLIAM VOLLMANN, ONE SENSES, NEEDS to be a writer. He needs it the way asthmatics need inhalers or diabetics need insulin: just to function. The evidence lies not merely in his output—nine volumes of often hefty fiction and reporting covering subjects from Arctic exploration to the Afghanistan civil war—but in the desperate tumult of his prose, its rushed impressionism. The world is a train that's quickly pulling away, and Vollmann has to catch it or he'll perish.

It's an infectious compulsion, as Vollmann's new book, *The Atlas,* goes to show. For Vollmann, just getting there is half the battle: off to war or down among the drunks, into the barracks, the crack house, the strip joint. He's everything a certain kind of writer—the kind who once wore a trench coat and swilled whiskey—is meant to be. Intrepid, footloose, honest. His persona is so elementally appealing that the reader feels eager to go adventuring with him, to hack through the jungly verbal undergrowth in search of the hidden temple at the trail's end.



The Atlas is a vine-choked uphill trek. Composed of 53 quasi-fictional stories, it calls for an extra-sharp machete and offers only fleeting glimpses of treasure. Exotic datelines dominate, from Goa, Goa, India, to Diesel Bend, Utah. The themes are love and motion. Vollmann's young male narrator (himself?) is constantly meeting, leaving, and remembering nameless females of every race. The quest for poontang spins his war-torn globe. Somewhere in the background is a wife; in the foreground are whores and miscellaneous girlfriends—Thai, Somalian, Californian—whom the traveler beds as if punching human tickets. These doomed, stoic matings can sound like lazy Hemingway: "Whenever I could find a phone that was working, I tried to call the woman who said things were too difficult to explain, but I never got through. Finally I reached her on the night before I was going to leave Sarajevo."

Women are the scenery in Vollmann's travels. They're what lakes were to Wordsworth or palaces to Ruskin. Mostly the women are beaten, lost, exhausted, a sort of global natural resource whose exploitation holds the writer spellbound.

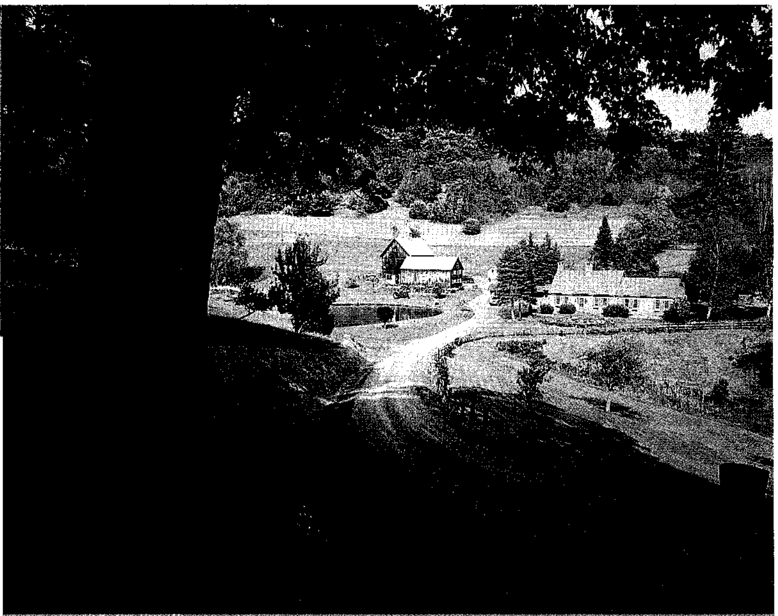
The cheesy atmospheres of Third World sex are his specialty. In Cambodia, he roams hotels and dance clubs, chatting up sleazy waiters and shifty drivers in an attempt to locate a lost love: "The restaurant was replete with music and empty chairs. The songs were sung by a Cambodian woman with a shrill yet very beautiful voice whose lonely vowels reminded him of a harpsichord's metallic loneliness. The chairs were all pulled back a little, as though skinny ghosts were sitting in them."

This is Vollmann at his best: tight, photographic, alert to detail. His forays into the tropical nightlife flash with gaudy imitation Rolexes. Wads of inflated currency litter the tables, lit by turning mirror balls. The reader breathes in the trashy internationalism of duty-free shops and subpar Hilton discos, all the poor translations of Planet Hollywood.

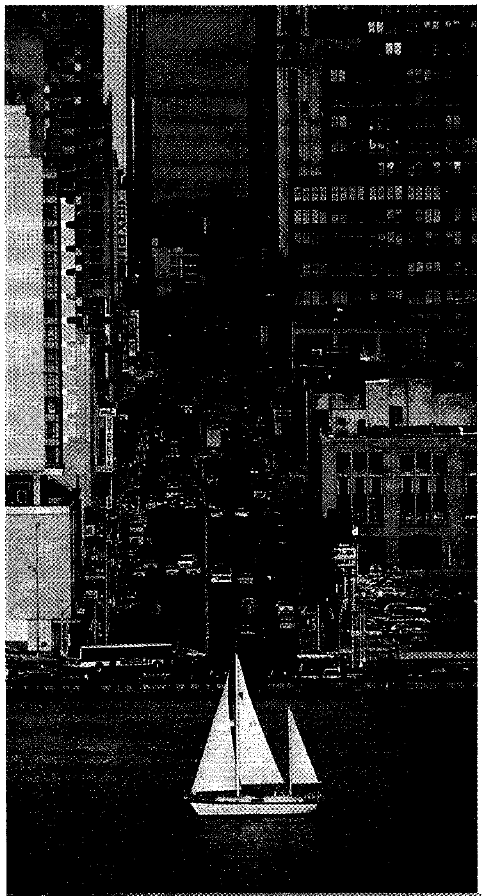
Vollmann's Graham Greene side is memorable and mesmerizing, but elsewhere *The Atlas* strays right off the map, into a sort of mythic never-never land where metaphors tower like baffling foreign monuments and gaining a sense of direction is impossible. The writing is too often wincingly awful, a purple turmoil of poetic gesturings. "Regardless waits the future like an ivory-handled pistol in a snakeskin belt." "Her kiss tasted of the penises of men long dead." The imagery is as awkward as the phrasing, as in this picture of the Kenyan policeman: "Really,

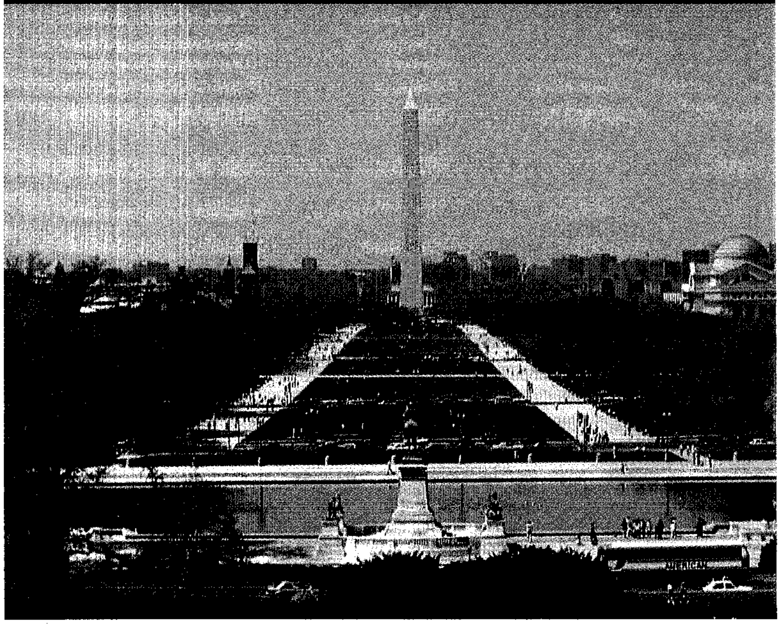
(continued on page 103)

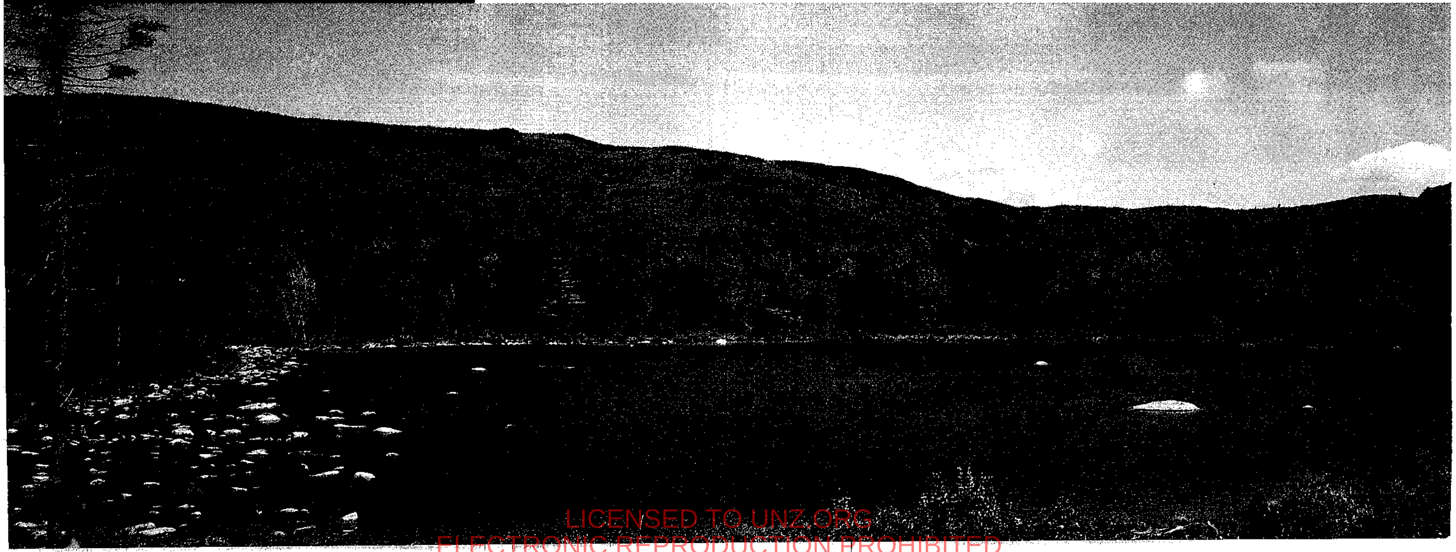
Photograph by Wayne Simpson.



SPRING WEEKEND GETAWAYS







Think green this spring—as in the Rockefeller Center Flower Show (April 6-14) and You Gotta Have Park! Weekend (May 18-19).

Spring break: No matter how long it's been since you were in school, the phrase conjures up a burst of freedom, a hedonistic escape from routine.

New Yorkers and visitors alike will find the city in bloom, the sun warm, and the temperature agreeable this time of year. It's not just the flower shows and the greenmarkets aburst with freshness and color now. Broadway introduces a new crop of talent, museums open their galleries with bright new shows, and street fairs and parades are energized with New York's inimitable vitality. Themed restaurants combine the pleasures of dining and entertainment under one roof. And by offering special weekend packages at rates lower than during the week, New York's hotels make staying in town overnight especially inviting.

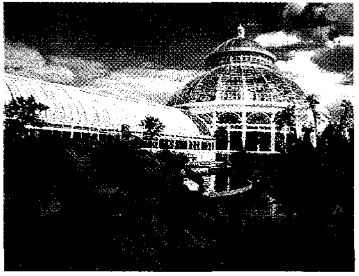
Long Island welcomes visitors to some true garden spots, including Old Westbury Gardens and Planting Fields Arboretum, for a stroll or a picnic. Travelers with shopping, scene-making, and beach activities in mind hie to the Hamptons for sybaritic weekends. North of the city, the Hudson Valley's great estates and vistas offer enchanting diversions.

Two or three hours' travel from the city in any direction will lead to a number of sights to celebrate the arrival of spring. As urban explorers, New Yorkers have an appreciation of other cities—their cosmopolitan culture, cuisine, and other sophisticated pleasures. The many neighborhoods and attractions of Boston, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C. are always worth a return trip just to catch up on what's new.

Mystic Seaport in Connecticut brings us back to a simpler time. Country spots like the Poconos and New Hope remind us how scenic surroundings can do wonders for the spirit.

So start planning now. It's your spring weekend getaway—and you've earned it.

ALLEN ROKACH/N



Antique Garden Furniture Show and Sale at the New York Botanical Garden from April 26.

Arbor days: Alice finds wonderland in the lap of Lewis.

JAMES JO

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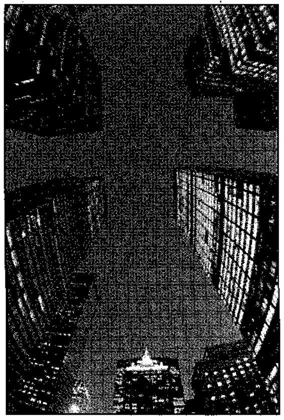

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DESTINATIONS

WALKING THROUGH HISTORY

BOSTON

April 15, 1996, the day of the 100th Boston Marathon. Excitement is already building for the event, which will be the single largest ever staged here and is expected to draw 50,000 participants.

Whenever you're planning on visiting, slow down the pace to explore unique Boston. To get your bearings, start with a trip to The Prudential Skywalk View. In one direction you'll see the early red-brick sidewalks and cobblestone streets of Brahmin society's Beacon Hill. Chic and trendy Back Bay is filled with Victorian townhouses, brownstones, boutiques, and cafés. Boston's downtown shopping area and midtown cultural district are likely to sate the most discerning taste.

Worth visiting for its architecture, rejuvenated South End is lined with 19th-century brick bow-front townhouses, and has some sizzling jazz clubs and restaurants. Head for the Fenway if your destination is Symphony Hall, the Museum of Fine Arts, or Chinatown. Historic Faneuil Hall Marketplace contains more than 100 boutiques and attracts a bevy of street entertainers; pause at adjacent Quincy Market for nourishment. The city's oldest neighborhood, the North End retains a lively Italian spirit. Well-marked walks guide visitors along Boston's famous Freedom Trail and the historic Black Heritage Trail.

A rainy day in Boston means more time to spend in the Museum of Fine Arts, the Children's Museum, or the Museum of Science.

For more information, call the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau, 800-888-5515.

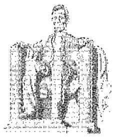
Combine a trip to Boston with a jaunt to Cape Cod, where more than 300 miles of sandy beaches, wild dunes, and picturesque New England cottages face the sea. Call the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce, 508-362-3225. In Western Massachusetts, Sturbridge Village (508-347-3362) has preserved the area's early 19th-century charm as well as its hospitality.

PRIMARY COLOR

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Which Washington, D.C. do you want to spend time in this spring: The seat of government power? City of monuments and museums? Performing arts mecca? College town? Shopper's delight? All can be part of a visit here; the hard part is deciding what to focus on.

If you haven't been to the Smithsonian Institution, National Air and Space Museum, National Museum of African Art, National Museum of American History, Renwick Gallery of 19th and 20th century decorative arts, and the National Portrait Gallery, delay no more.



Equally fascinating are the Art Museum of the Americas, the Art, Science & Technology Institute, Holography Museum of the 3rd Dimension, and the Holocaust Museum. Youngsters may especially enjoy a trip to the recently opened National Gallery of Caricature and Cartoon Art.

Ford's Theater and the Lincoln Memorial are just two stops on Washington, D.C.'s Civil War Discovery Trail.

The outdoor Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Vietnam memorials always draw crowds. Two newer, Polaroid-worthy monuments include the 21-foot-tall statue of Albert Einstein and the Korean War Memorial.

On warm spring days visitors flock to the city's dozen well-tended parks. Mannered and tranquil, the Japanese Embassy Garden contains imported maple and cherry trees and an authentic teahouse.

Among Washington's more colorful neighborhoods are Adams-Morgan, which features an array of low-priced, exotic restaurants. Radiating out from

Dupont Circle are many of the city's most interesting shops and bookstores. New D.C. eateries include Planet Hollywood, the Hard Rock Cafe, and a transplant of Boston's Legal Seafood.

If shopping is your pleasure, you've a vast choice of locations. Easy to reach by the Metro, the Crystal City mall holds more than 100 specialty shops, and Georgetown Park is a four-level shopping extravaganza, with F.A.O. Schwarz and Polo Store outposts. Right in town, the Chanel Boutique has the distinction of being the world's largest.

Can't decide what to do first? The DC Ducks Tour can help you make choices. Visitors board a 33-passenger amphibious carrier that navigates the nation's capital for 90 minutes.

For more information, call Washington, D.C. Convention & Visitors Association, 202-789-7000.

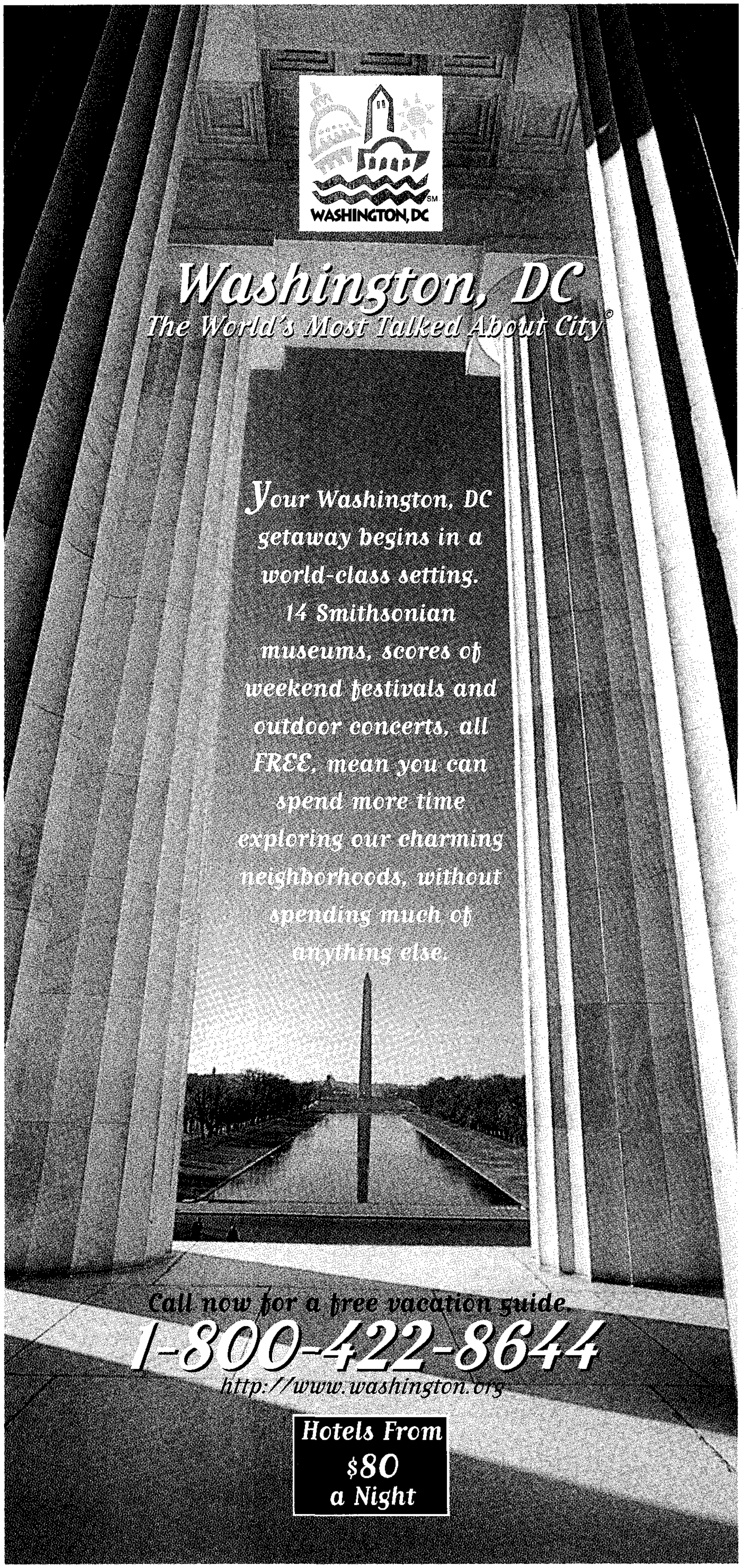
AT WATER'S EDGE
MYSTIC SEAPORT, CT

Spread across 17 acres on the southeastern coast of Connecticut, Mystic Seaport is a maritime mecca. More than an historic building or two, the village recalls America's 19th-century heritage and seafaring economy. Evoking simpler times, quaint Mystic keeps tradition alive with waterfront demonstrations of crafts and trades that date back over a century.

Among the major attractions are the whaleship *Charles W. Morgan*, which is a National Historic Landmark, and the

CONNECTICUT TOURISM OFFICE

A romantic hideaway in Old Mistick Village.



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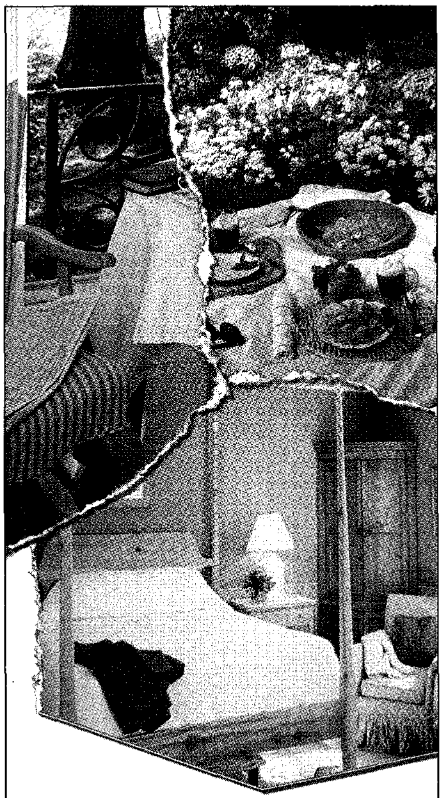

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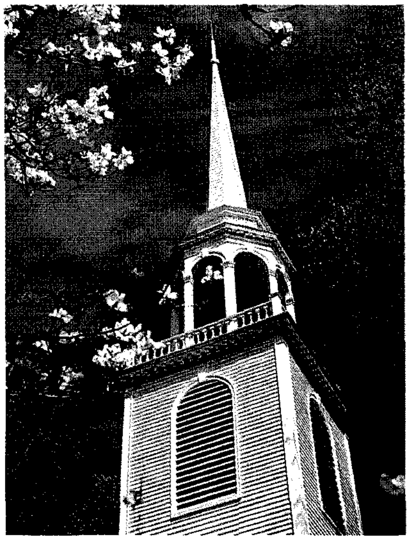
Old Lighthouse Museum. Downtown Mystic's Bascule Bridge, set against a backdrop of world-class yachts, brings together those who enjoy shopping with those who like to ogle millionaires' vessels. Sport-fishing charters leave from the two Mystic marinas.

Old Mistick Village shopping center, which was built in 18th-century architectural style, contains more than 60 up-to-date shops, restaurants, and a movie theater. Mystic Factory Outlets features sportswear, shoes, outerwear, kitchenware, and more.

Antiques lovers will find prized collections inside the large Mystic River Antiques Market. Dealers' wares range from early American furniture to Victorian treasures. Open indoors year round, Mystic Carousel Fun Center features rides and games for children. At Mystic Marinelife Aquarium, Beluga whales and Atlantic bottlenose dolphins are the main attractions from more than 3,500 marine specimens.

Romantics headed for Mystic may want to follow the Connecticut Wine Trail, which meanders through the state's western hills, to sample local vintages. Competing in beauty with the scenery are paintings that can be seen on the Connecticut Impressionist Art Trail, which extends from Greenwich to New London, north to Storrs, and back west towards Hartford. Plan a weekend stay at a nearby country inn and spa to complete the delightful indulgence.

For more information, call Connecticut Mystic and More!, 800-TO-ENJOY.



MARIA PAPE

White steeples punctuate New England's countryside.

SHOPPER'S SYLVAN PARADISE
NEW HOPE, PA

A sophisticated country town on the Delaware River, New Hope is a successful blend of history and commerce that attracts couples in search of romance, tranquility, and memories to carry home. Founded in 1681, the town's thousand acres contain nearly 250 sites recorded in the National Register of Historical Places.

Plan a guided whitewater tour of the Lehigh River or any other Poconos area adventure. Call the Pocono Mountains Vacation Bureau, 800-POCONOS.

Self-guided or expert-led historic walking tours can be arranged, and a company called Ghost Tours takes the adventurous on lantern-lit journeys to spooky spots. But walking isn't the only way to see New Hope and other parts of Bucks County. Visitors can tube, canoe, or take a ferry ride down the Delaware on a Mississippi-style stern wheel river boat. Couples can also trot by horse and carriage or by mule barge, enjoy the view from a hot-air balloon, or board an authentic steam train that weaves through the countryside.

If shopping is your favorite activity, start your stroll along the canal and then head for Main Street. But pace yourself: New Hope contains more than 200 art galleries, antiques shops, boutiques, and unique craft shops.

Established in 1860, Rice's Sale & Country Market sells a legendary variety of new and old goods. Main Street shops include A Mano Gallery, where creations by more than 500 artisans are on display. The Bed & Breakfast Emporium specializes in one-of-a-kind brass and iron beds. New Hope Miniatures' hand-crafted dolls and collectibles make childhood at any age happier.

Depending on your favorite indulgence, reward yourself for a day of tireless browsing with fresh hand-dipped strawberries from Country Fair Chocolate, or a bottle from Buckingham Valley, Bucks County's first winery.

For more information, call the New Hope Chamber of Commerce, 215-862-5880.

NYC&VB

SPRING THINGS
NYC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Hold onto your bonnet! Springtime's arrived in New York, and with it a bountiful crop of things to do and see. This is the time of year New Yorkers—and their city—flourish.

April 1
New York Mets baseball season opens
Shea Stadium, Queens

April 6-14
New York International Automobile Show
Jacob Javits Convention Center

April 6-21
Radio City Spring Spectacular
Radio City Music Hall

April 7
Easter Parade
Fifth Avenue, from 44th to 57th streets

April 9
New York Yankees baseball season opens
Yankee Stadium, Bronx

April 11-14
Park Avenue Antiques Show
Park Avenue at 84th Street

April 20
Earth Awareness Day Festival '96
Waverly Place, from Broadway to Sixth Avenue

April 28
"Picasso and Portraiture" opening
The Museum of Modern Art

May 5
Cinco de Mayo Festival
Park Avenue from 14th to 23rd streets;
Bike New York: The Great Five Boro Bike Tour
Battery Park to Staten Island

May 8
Sail to Steam Ship Model Collection
South Street Seaport Museum

May 12
Third Avenue Spring Festival
Astor Place to 14th Street

May 22-29
Fleet Week
Intrepid Sea*Air*Space Museum
Hudson River and West 46th Street

May 26
52nd Street Association Jazz Festival

June 15
The SoHo Festival
Broadway from Canal to Spring streets

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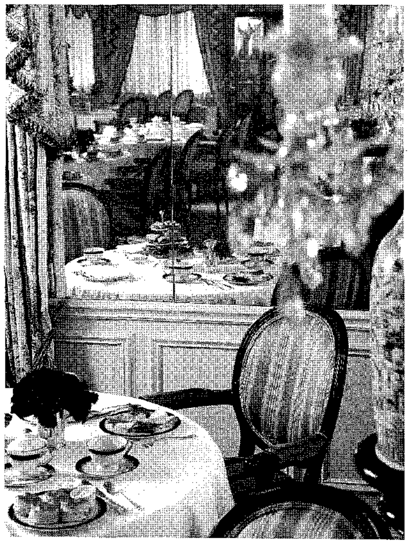

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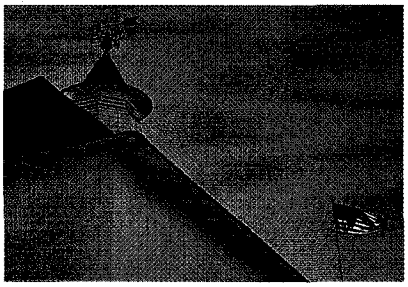

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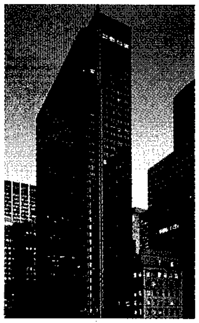

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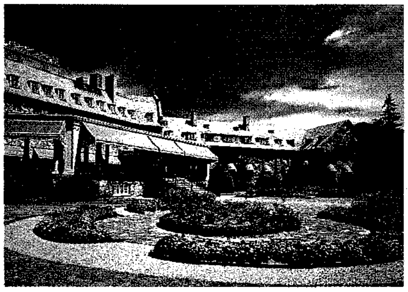

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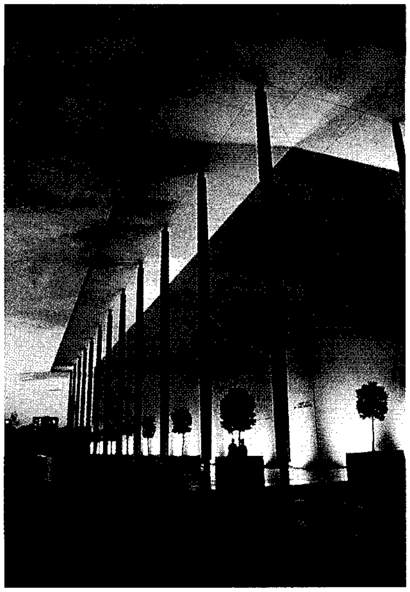
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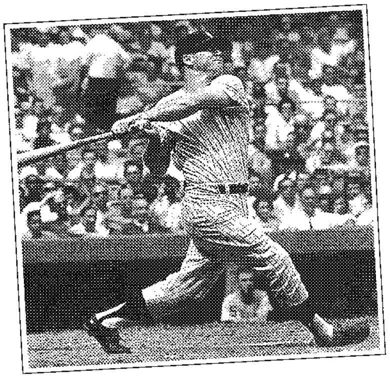

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Blue Notes and Blue Ribbons

A play can be improved to death, but terrific ensemble acting saves August Wilson's 'Seven Guitars.' 'State Fair' exudes cheapness in all directions.

Chitchat by the yard: Tommy Hollis, Keith David, Roger Robinson, and Ruben Santiago-Hudson in *Seven Guitars.*

AUGUST WILSON'S **Seven Guitars** IS A STRANGE 185-minute work that divides into two very different acts. Act One is more poetry than drama. Several characters in the backyard of a shabby Pittsburgh boarding house in 1948 talk, ruminate, fantasize, and almost nothing happens. The voices rise to riffs or arias, or blend in impassioned duets or polytonal fugatos. It is preponderantly texture, mood, atmosphere. It goes nowhere, but it is beautifully written, with playful fluidity and often flashing intensity or mordant wit. Though long and free-floating, it is never dull.

In Act Two, action takes over with a vengeance. There are still arias, notably from Hedley, a half-crazed West Indian who raises chickens and dreams of a mythical fortune, and Floyd, a blues guitarist who has just come out of prison to find himself on the verge of success. He sees himself in Chicago, with his sidemen, the ironic Canewell and easygoing Red, married to Vera, whom he once abandoned but who now reluctantly reciprocates his rekindled passion. But the action is often insufficiently logical, persuasive, or satisfying, and is finally frustrating.

The actors are splendid: Keith David as the mercurial Floyd, Viola Davis as the high-minded Vera, Michele Shay as the sassy Louise, Roger Robinson as the volatile Hedley, Tommy Hollis as the flavorful Red, and Rosalyn Coleman as Louise's sexy and pregnant unmarried niece, Ruby (who unleashes trouble), could not be better individually or as an ensemble. And as Canewell, the amazing Ruben Santiago-Hudson can turn a mildly idiosyncratic remark into an unforgettable utterance through mischievous sparkle, seriocomic crispness, or clipped poignancy. The direction by Lloyd Richards, Wilson's longtime collaborator, is masterly; Scott Bradley's realistic set squeezes beauty out of squalor, and is lighted, lyrically as well as dramatically, by the gifted Christopher Akerlind. Constanza Romero's costumes fit the characters as naturally as their skin, and bluesy music provides evocative bridges between scenes. And yet something is subtly wrong.

There is the moral muddle. Floyd is perceived as grander than he is; why doesn't he have more sense than to bury his ill-gotten money ineptly, or to count it, when dug up, so conspicuously and provocatively? Why doesn't the scrupulous Vera question his sudden wealth? Why does the beautiful Ruby pick a tubercular old man to be sexually involved with, however much she needs a father for her unborn child?

And there are too many inconsistencies, which may have to do with the way a Wilson play is born. It is tried out in four or five theaters before it reaches Broadway, and requires a couple of years' rewriting and pruning from enormous length, with speeches transferred from character to character, relationships constantly changed, every new venue providing creative input. The dramatis personae wax and wane like stalagmites and stalactites. You wonder whether other playwrights, accorded such rare privileges, might not do equally well.

Then you realize that the method also has its drawbacks. Too much tinkering, refining, restructuring has gone into the work; there is a loss of spontaneity, of unimpeded impetus. Speeches transposed from mouth to mouth, scenes shifted from place to place result in a blurring of vision: A play can be improved to death. I

Photograph by Joan Marcus.

am not saying that this is quite the case here, but there is much elucubration and diffuseness. What saves *Seven Guitars,* however, is the acting and the staging; there, truly, a world is created.

THE RODGERS & HAMMERSTEIN MUSICAL **State Fair** was intended for the movies, to which, had R&H been Shakespeare, they would have left their second-best bed. It has a couple of fine songs—“It’s a Grand Night for Singing,” which, however, needs a Ferris wheel to be sung on, and “It Might As Well Be Spring,” which needs someone less off-putting than Andrea McArdle to put it across. The pig-farming Frake family is off to the Iowa State Fair: Pa Abel’s prize boar, Blue Boy, will become bluer by a blue ribbon; Ma Melissa Frake will win prizes for her cookery; son Wayne and daughter Margy will win or lose the newly acquired loves of their lives. The new book, by Tom Briggs and Louis Mattioli, may not be worse than the three movie versions that preceded it but is still as corny as Iowa in August.

The production, which has regrettably inveigled David Merrick into lending it his name, exudes cheapness in both senses and in all directions. It looks fit only for summer stock in a particularly backward region, yet was emboldened to travel across the country and land, in a leap of faith, on Broadway. It appears fully foldable into not too many valises and, as unimaginatively but inexpensively executed by the inaptly named James Leonard Joy, could set painted-canvas backdrops back a century or two. Michael Bottari and Ronald Case’s costumes should be buried in a trunk in Pocatello.

> *“. . . ‘I Do! I Do!’ is one of our most engaging, engrossing musicals, and this revival fully lives up to its original production.* **What greater praise** *can I give it?. . .”*

As Abel Frake, John Davidson mugs relentlessly with face, body, and voice; even his hairdo hams it up. The entire performance, in fact, is so hammy that you wonder whether he is playing Abel or Blue Boy. The Melissa of Kathryn Crosby is lots of cliché and very little voice. Andrea McArdle (Margy) should have retired after *Annie,* while she was ahead. She now has a poker face, a ramrod figure, and the charm of a meat cleaver. But Ben Wright (Wayne) is altogether lively and likable.

As Emily, the older song-and-dance woman with whom Wayne falls in love, the treasurable Donna McKechnie shines on with more luster than a harvest moon; as Pat Gilbert, the rising reporter, Scott Wise acts and sings pleasantly, and dances spectacularly. Randy Skinner’s choreography is serviceable, but his and James Hammerstein’s staging is static and stilted. Musically, the show fares better, what with some interpolated songs from other and finer R&H musicals and solid arrangements and orchestrations by Kay Cameron, Bruce Pomahac, and Scot Wooley. Still, this largely swinish *State Fair* mostly wallows in mud rather than making it into clover.

TOM JONES AND HARVEY SCHMIDT’S **I Do! I Do!** is one of our most engaging, engrossing musicals. Based on Jan de Hartog’s charming play *The Fourposter,* this 1966 show was directed and choreographed by Gower Champion and starred Mary Martin and Robert Preston, champions in their own right. The current revival of this initially slightly sentimental, gradually more involving, and eventually overpowering work fully lives up to its original production. What greater praise can I give it?

Here is the story of Michael and Agnes, two virginal creatures who marry in 1898 and live in the same house for 50 years, have (unseen) children and friends and lovers (this last is a bit fudged here), and are in the end seen moving into more modest quarters. With only two characters and hardly any plot, *I Do! I Do!* nevertheless manages to encapsulate a microcosm as it evolves through the first half of our century. Whether you are as innocent as these spouses in the beginning, or an experienced sophisticate, you are bound to find here, again and again, an image of yourself and your life as you progress from amused recognition to empathetic absorption.

The show is superbly performed by Karen Ziemba and David Garrison. They both look like wholesome, wholly unhistrionic human beings, with a nice ordinariness suffused with grace. Such is their naturalness that they can make singing and dancing seem not a form of stylization but just a heightened state of being. The score is a delight from top to bottom, with at least two memorable songs.

Will Mackenzie has directed with an intoxicating flow and a keen sense of detail, and Janet Watson’s choreography is simple and direct. The two-piano arrangement, expertly played by Tim Stella and Valerie Gerbert, makes an orchestra seem expendable. Ed Wittstein’s unpretentious set and Suzy Benzinger’s pert costumes thrive under Mary Jo Dondlinger’s merry lights. This is the kind of show that brings you closer to your spouse or lover—perhaps even turns you into a better human being than you were when you entered. ■

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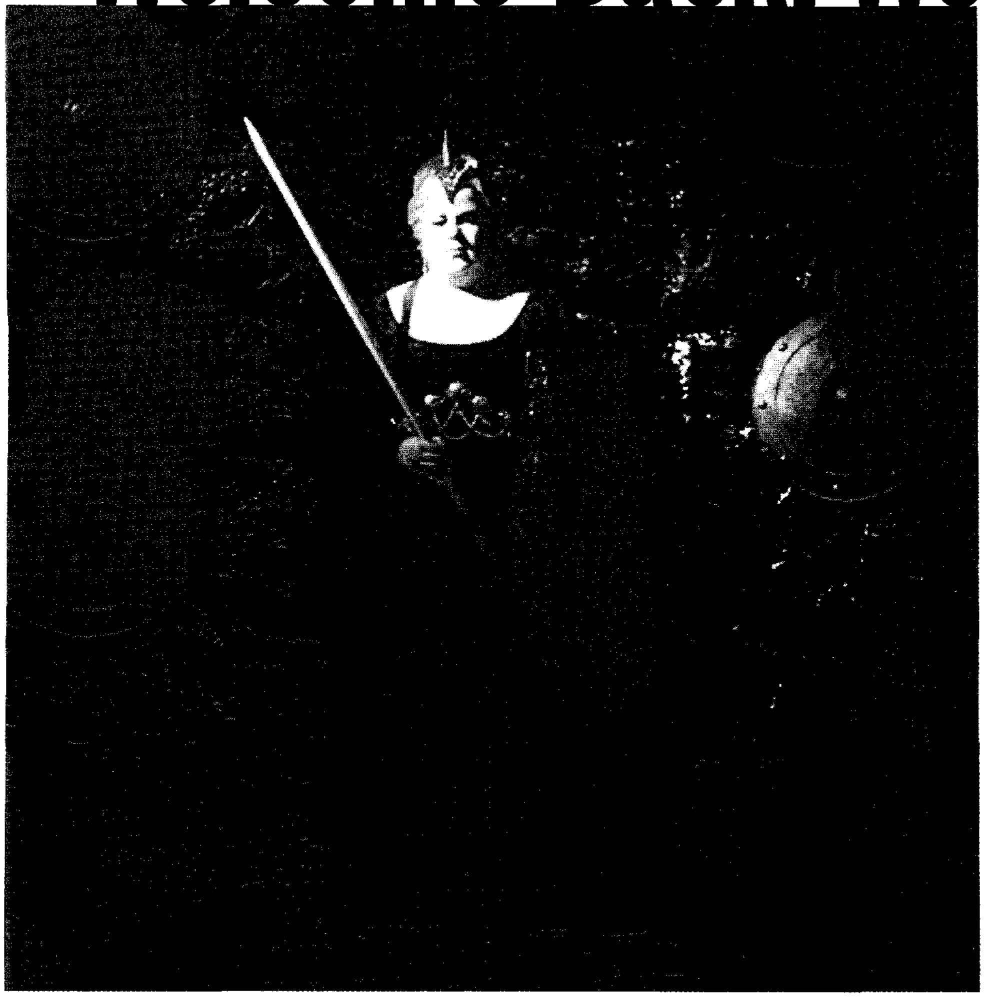
Welcome Back, Wotan

Chicago's Lyric Opera turns Wagner's apocalyptic 'Ring' into an Olympian sitcom.



Where Eaglen dares: An almost believable Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre.*

THERE SEEMS TO BE A NATIONWIDE HUNGER right now for Wagner's **Der Ring des Nibelungen,** opera's grandest spectacle and, as the critic Andrew Porter has written, "the most influential drama ever created." The Lyric Opera of Chicago has just devoted much of March to three presentations of the full four-part cycle, and sold-out signs were already posted last August. The Arizona Opera unfolds the next *Ring* this June in Flagstaff, with the Southwest's canyon country providing the appropriate backdrop. Back in New York, the Metropolitan plans to revive its lavish storybook version next season, a hugely popular production preserved on CD and video. The Seattle Opera's latest *Ring* had its farewell performances last summer, but the company is already at work on a new staging for the millennium. In 1999, the San Francisco Opera is hoping to bring back its neoclassical *Ring,* which many connoisseurs consider the most beautiful of all. Yes, *Ring*heads who never miss a production anywhere in the world are being kept busy. One globe-trotting ophthalmologist from Los Angeles arrived in Chicago to log in his thirty-ninth cycle since *Ring* fever struck him in the late seventies.

Unlike most European productions, made-in-America *Ring*s tend to tread lightly around the deeper philosophical, social, and political implications of this saga. The primary aim is to put on a good show that keeps the story line clear and the scenic wonders coming—a legitimate part of the *Ring*'s appeal as gods, giants, dwarfs, and mortals jockey for power, sex, and gold. The Chicago cycle, designed by John Conklin and staged by August Everding, may not exactly dazzle the senses in this respect (costing $6.5 million, this is a comparatively economical *Ring*), but many of the solutions are nothing if not original and ingenious. The aquatic ballet of the Rhinemaidens is accomplished by aerialists on elastic bungee cords, while nine armor-clad Valkyries cavort through the skies by merrily bouncing over a trampoline stretched across the rear of the stage. When Siegfried's dragon clambers out of his cave, we see a massive, skeletal reptile whose claws, fangs, and chomping jaws are animated by sixteen onstage puppeteers.

Both Everding and Conklin are veteran *Ring* masters who have tested a variety of interpretations. For Chicago, says the director, the idea was essentially to present a "domestic drama" about Wotan and his dysfunctional extended family—a theme most Americans can probably identify and run with in 1996. And sure enough, this particular *Das Rheingold,* the cycle's opening opera, does rather resemble the first installment in an Olympian sitcom. Young Wotan is visibly horny and weary of his nagging, fashion-obsessed wife, Fricka. When not petulantly playing with his yo-yo, Froh dons a bib and hogs the last youth-giving apples from the other gods. The sentimental giant Fasolt arrives for a date with Freia, his payment for building Valhalla, bearing an elaborate floral bouquet. Looking like any successful businessman, Alberich sits on his golden horde and lights up a cigar. Loge, the god of fire, is a busybody who figuratively (and later literally) burns up everybody. It's theatrically lively and fun to watch, but this over-the-top *Das Rheingold* often seems closer to Offenbach than to Wagner.

Things inevitably turn darker once the human drama begins, but the frivolous atmosphere has been established and seriously weakens the central issue: the tragedy of Wotan and his illegitimate brood, sired to forestall the gods' inescapable doom. Everding has plenty of ideas on his way to *Götterdämmerung,* the opera

Photographs courtesy of the Lyric Opera, Chicago.

that responds best to his skill at defining character and energizing confrontational conflict, but for every happy inspiration there are half a dozen that are implausible, inconsistent, or incomprehensible. The first act of *Siegfried* is brilliantly staged in Mime's forest smithy, a cramped space cluttered with the teenage hero's old baby clothes and toys (including a cute hobbyhorse dragon)—poignant reminders to Wotan, when he drops by, of his unacknowledged grandson. On the other hand, introducing the first three operas with a silent vision of the Norns weaving their ropes of fate may be a clever stroke, but Wagner's theme-driven music does not support it. Questions abound. Why is Brünnhilde put to sleep standing up, and who moved her to that embalming slab where Siegfried finds her years later? What is the significance of turning Wotan's spear into a rustic shillelagh and why is Alberich's right hand a metal claw? By the cycle's midpoint even the all-knowing Erda would be stymied by so many inexplicable inventions.

Conklin's eclectic modular sets are not tied into any particular time or place, and their let's-try-it-and-see-if-it-works nature is often just as baffling. The jumble of styles includes effective dashes of Kabuki: the two giants' huge paper-and-wire doppelgängers, witty cardboard cutouts to represent Alberich's animal transformations, and a charming origami forest bird manipulated by yet another Peter Pan aerialist. Less successful are the color-coded traveling shafts of neon light to signify earth-fire-air-water elements, a patented Robert Wilson device and used to better purpose by its originator. Much is downright ugly: the tacky hotel-lobby steps leading to Valhalla, the triangular slag-pile Valkyrie rock, the feeble final apocalypse with the Rhinemaidens waving a large blue sheet, and a collection of dingy mural backdrops.

Morris and Eaglen in *Die Walküre.*

Curiosity over the look of any new *Ring* always runs high, but the main reason that this operatic epic has fascinated audiences and lured them back for more than a century is the intoxicating music. Here the Chicago Lyric scored high points by assembling the strongest cast possible at a time when Wagner singers have never been scarcer and the global demand never greater. Most out-of-town *Ring* fanatics zeroed in on the second cycle in order to see and hear Jane Eaglen, at 36 widely considered to be the heroic soprano the world has been waiting for and singing her first Brünnhildes in sequence.

Eaglen began gingerly in *Die Walküre,* warmed to the role in *Siegfried,* and delivered consistent excellence in *Götterdämmerung.* In size, scale, and quality of tone, this is indeed the first truly legitimate Brünnhilde voice since Birgit Nilsson's, and some may even prefer its warmer, more pliable texture in mid-register. She fully understands the musical demands of the role and commands nearly all of them—imagine, a Brünnhilde who can spin out a soft, caressing legato line and give full expressive value to the words just as easily as she pumps up the volume to cut a villain dead. Some hear flaws in the technique and predict trouble ahead for a singer who is clearly not entirely comfortable at the top of her range; no comparison with Nilsson here. Another drawback is her generous size, which prevents comfortable stage movement and seriously interferes with dramatic credibility. An appealingly spontaneous, giving performer, Eaglen wins audiences to her side, but it would be folly to deny that a problem exists.

As his namesake, Siegfried Jerusalem audibly tires before the end of each opera and much of the lyrical quality in his tenor has been drained away, but I can think of no other Siegfried right now who brings a more personable presence or a keener musical intelligence to the part. Although the velvet nap is also beginning to wear off James Morris's deluxe bass-baritone, his Wotan continues to be a reliable as well as an increasingly interesting dramatic personality who makes an effective foil to Marjana Lipovšek's imperious Fricka. Matti Salminen's voluminous bass is today's voice of choice for such Wagnerian blackguards as Fafner, Hunding, and Hagen, as is Ekkehard Wlaschiha's edgy snarl for Alberich. As Loge and Mime, Graham Clark seemed more intent on performing calisthenics than singing or acting, and the incestuous twins Siegmund (Poul Elming) and Sieglinde (Tina Kiberg) looked better than they sounded, but in general the vocal quality was astonishingly high.

I did not much care for the sodden instrumental textures and shapeless musical organization of Zubin Mehta's interpretation, apparently a minority opinion since the conductor was rapturously received before each act. But then, I've heard far worse *Rings* greeted with even more enthusiasm. Obviously, American audiences—especially, it seems, in an election year—have a special need for this epic and its larger-than-life characters who grapple heroically with the biggest issues. ■

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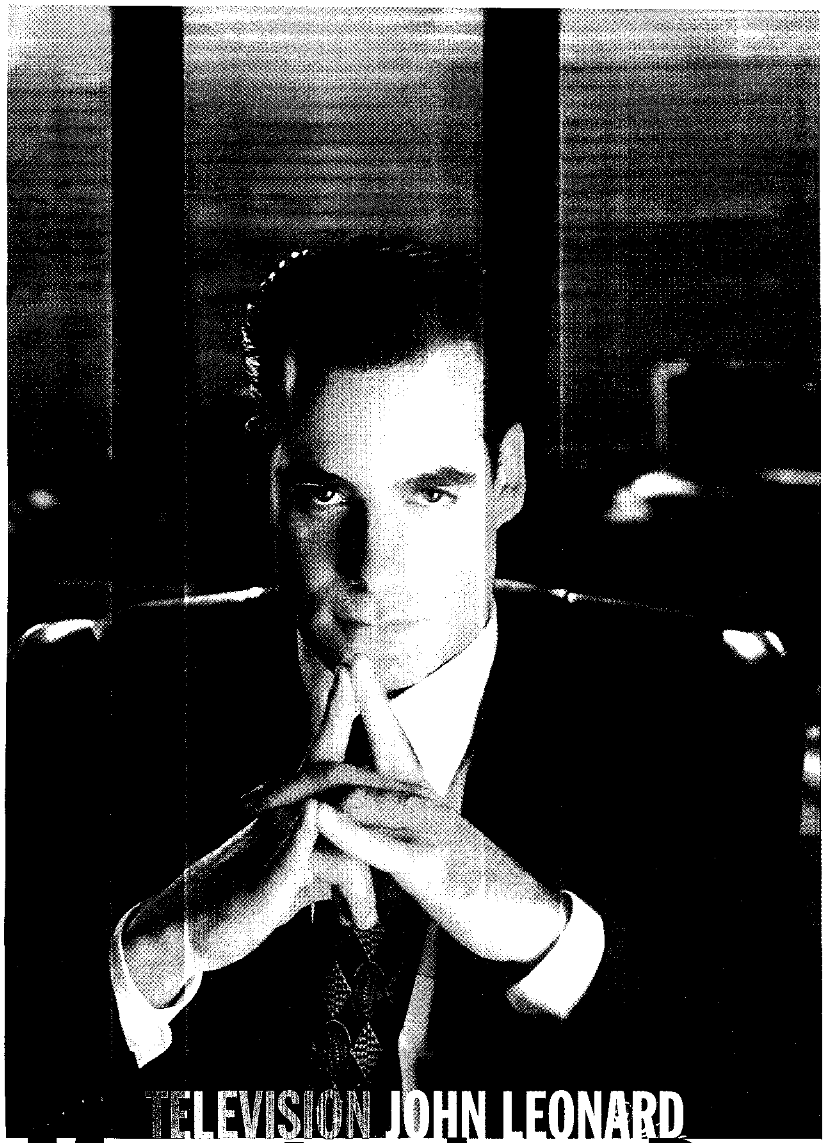

TELEVISION JOHN LEONARD

Monster in a Box

With a baby-food scandal here, some rumors of lesbianism there, Fox's 'Profit,' about a Beckettian CEO wannabe, has crazy energy to spare.

Machiavelli with a PowerBook: Adrian Pasdar as company man Jim Profit.

LIKE IAN RICHARDSON'S FRANCIS URQUHART, Adrian Pasdar's Jim Profit talks to the camera, as if he were his own color analyst, a sort of predatory Dick Vitale. But instead of Tory politics on the way to 10 Downing Street, the greasy pole Jim climbs in **Profit** (premiering Monday, April 8; 8 to 10 P.M.; Mondays thereafter, 9 to 10 P.M.; Fox), on his way to CEO at Gracen & Gracen, the Fortune 500 multinational octopus, is corporate hugger-mugger. He is Sun Tzu writing on war while waging it, or Machiavelli with a PowerBook. But he's also (and this is where *Profit* gets interesting) a character out of Samuel Beckett, with the usual Beckettian womb fixation. Instead of a mound, an urn, or a rubbish bin, he finds himself in a cardboard box. I'll explain in a minute.

First, you should know that Profit is the new man in acquisitions at Gracen & Gracen, "The Family Company." The old man died of a surprise heart attack. At the company funeral—one almost expects a company anthem and beanie—our Jim is already suborning his predecessor's secretary (Lisa Darr). His previous post was in auditing, and if he doesn't know everybody's dirty little secret, he will simulate one on his computer screen, which glows in the dark like his tank of tropical fish. So Chaz Gracen (Keith Szarabajka), the CEO, is a "wantonly cruel and endlessly greedy" philanderer; the younger Gracen brother, Pete (Jack Gwaltney), is an impotent alcoholic; and Jim's immediate boss, Jack (Scott Paulin), is in over his head in debt, while playing footsie with the chief of corporate security (Lisa Zane), who has her own, traumatic, sibling-rivalry secret. With a little forgery here and a little blackmail there, deleted files, a baby-food scandal, rumors of lesbianism, and a frame-up for murder, Jim will cut his way through wormwood to get to the top. Nothing is beneath these eager good looks. In the pilot, he pretends to be a vegetarian. Next week, he poses as a recovering alcoholic at a twelve-step meeting. Think of Michael J. Fox as a cokehead in *Bright Lights, Big City*.

But Jim has secrets, too—including a heroin-addicted stepmother (Lisa Blount), a father in a burn ward, an offshore banker who may be laundering money for Middle Eastern terrorists, and a Tulsa warrant for his arrest. Which brings us back to Beckett. In the opening credits of the *Profit* pilot, and in the concluding shot, we see Jim crouched, naked in the fetal position, in a cardboard box. He was raised in such a box in Tulsa. Literally. His abusive father dumped an infant Jim into a brown cardboard moving box—with the Gracen & Gracen corporate logo (THE FAMILY COMPANY) stamped on its side and a hole through which Jim could watch the television, which was always on. "Do you believe in the life to come?" asked Beckett in *Endgame*. "Mine was always that." Or, as Malone observed, while dying, "If I had the use of my body, I would throw it out of the window." So upward corporate mobility is a form of patricide.

As we might expect from executive producers like David Greenwalt (*Shannon's Deal*), John McNamara (*Lois & Clark*), and Stephen J. Cannell (both the Barnum and the Freud of pulp dreams), *Profit* has a lot of motives. It has also got more crazy energy than any other new melodrama so far this spring, most of them cop shows.

SAN FRANCISCO LOOKS TERRIFIC IN **Nash Bridges** (FRIDAYS; 10 to 11 P.M.; CBS), and Don Johnson, with two ex-wives, a teenage daughter, Cheech Marin, and a bag of magic tricks, can still turn on the rakish, Joe Namath charm; but saving millions of dollars' worth of stolen computer chips from Hong Kong Triads and Communist Chinese isn't nearly as much fun as undercovering Miami vice and Latin American revolution. While I like Louis Mustillo as Russell Topps and his inside movie jokes in **Eric Bogosian's High Incident** (Mondays; 9 to 10 P.M.; ABC), this six-pack of squad cars, always arriving at domestic trouble in suburban Southern California, is

Photograph by Aaron Rapoport/Fox.

old news on the police frequency. **Pacific Blue** (Saturdays; 8 to 9 P.M.; USA) is exactly what we didn't need—cops on bicycles, in short pants, in Santa Monica, outpedaling car-jackers, drug dealers, and neo-Nazi surfers. There were also neo-Nazis the other night in **Swift Justice** (Wednesdays; 9 to 10 P.M.; UPN), but furious ex-cop James McCaffrey beat up on all of them, with more than a little help from his buddies on the force. Also debuting on UPN a couple of Wednesdays ago was **The Sentinel** (8 to 9 P.M.), with Richard Burgi as a cop who develops extrasensory powers in the Peruvian jungle just in time to foil the usual tourist-guide female serial bomber. Almost all these cops are indifferent to, and contemptuous of, the legal niceties of breaking and entering, search and seizure, warrants, Mirandas, and even kidnapping. Like their role models on *Law & Order* and *NYPD Blue,* they even gloat about the death penalty, as if TV had finally been reduced to the lowest common (lynch mob–Pataki) denominator of the culture it mimics. You'd think they were ready for the private sector. There might even be a job at Gracen & Gracen.

Accuracy in Media, the American Enterprise Institute, and other capitalist tools are always complaining about the lousy image of big business on television, and they'll probably bitch about *Profit* too. They have a point. Daddy Warbucks has been disapproved of on TV since Rod Serling's teleplay *Patterns* in 1955. Soaps like *Dallas* and *Dynasty* did nothing to improve his rep, nor did mini-series like *Captains and the Kings, Seventh Avenue,* and *The Money Changers,* not to mention Larry Gelbart's *Barbarians at the Gate.* On the other hand, American literature has been just as unkind. Except for Emerson (who thought money as beautiful as roses) and Dreiser (who hated his financier) and Ayn Rand (who was looney-tunes), ours is a literature of proletarian antiheroes: whaling captains, cowboys, private eyes, cyberpunks. Even Arthur Miller's salesman had to die to get attention. On the third hand, all of Western culture has always had its doubts about money-grubbers. Think of Dickens in his blacking factory, and any number of English industrial novels. Or Kafka, who invented workmen's comp and might as well have been writing about modern corporations.

What does the business community expect, when its idea of grace is a spider-speak in green decimals of international-currency speculation? Why not be satisfied with ownership of all the commercials? Who needs respect when you've got liquidity? "The populace may hiss me," said Horace in a hot epistle in 25 B.C., "but when I go home and think of my money, I applaud myself." ▬

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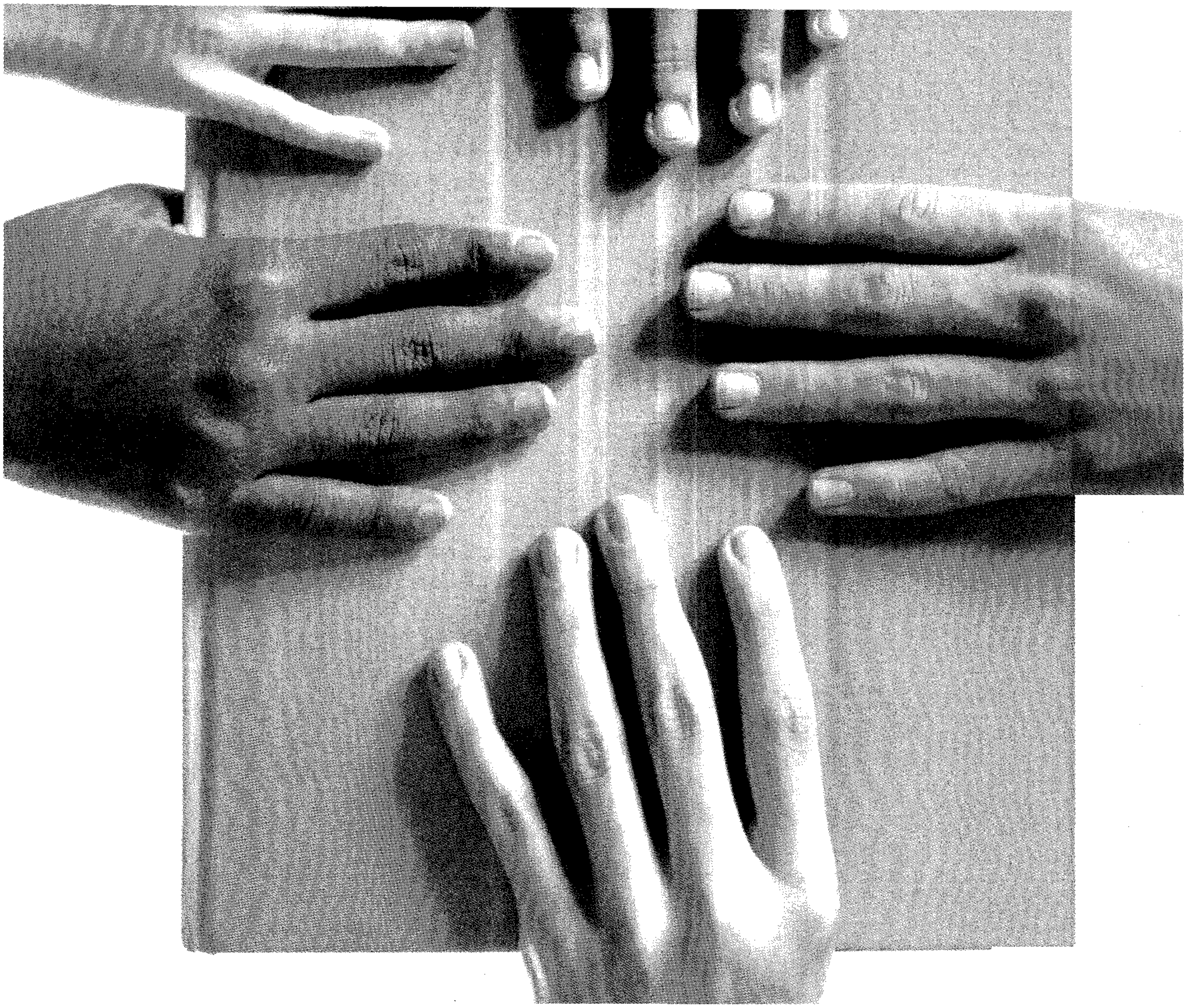

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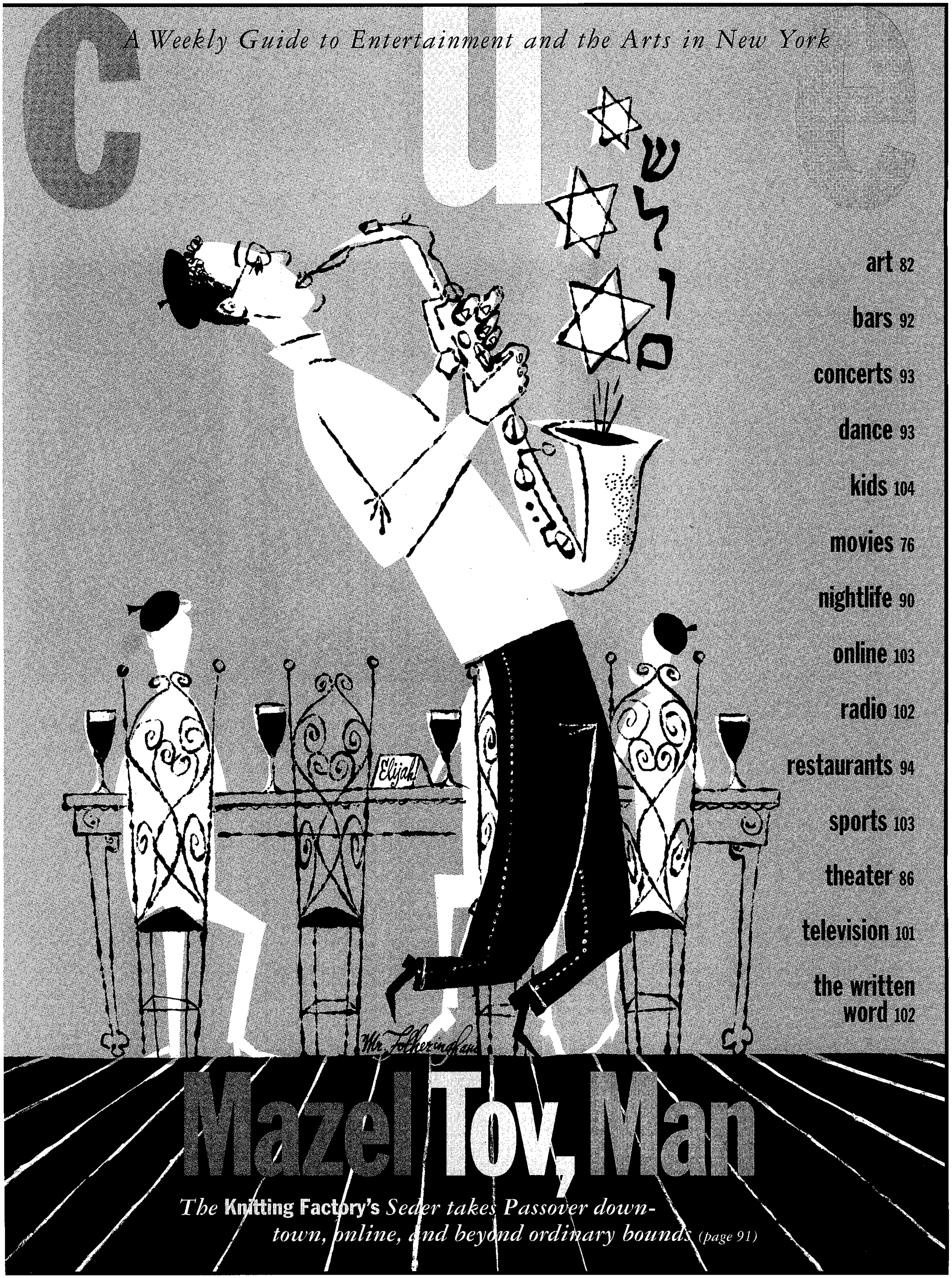
A Weekly Guide to Entertainment and the Arts in New York



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Mazel Tov, Man

The **Knitting Factory's** *Seder takes Passover downtown, online, and beyond ordinary bounds* (page 91)

ILLUSTRATION BY EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM
FOR NEW YORK

movies

The Umbrellas of Cherbourg...Primal Fear

New Films

All Dogs Go to Heaven 2—A dead dog named Charlie (voice of Charlie Sheen) teams up with a fetching Irish setter (Sheena Easton) to retrieve an angel's lost horn. (1 hr. 21 mins.; G) *Village East; 23rd Street West Triplex; Murray Hill Cinemas; Embassy 1; Manhattan Twin; 86th Street; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum; Nova; Plaza.*

★**Angels & Insects**—In the early 1860s, a young naturalist, William Adamson (Mark Rylance), returns to England after years spent in the Amazon. He is dependent on the patronage of a wealthy, aristocratic family, the Alabasters, in whose great Gothic house he takes residence. The ugly gray pile seems haunted—by the withdrawal, perhaps, of divine beneficence from the natural order, or by some dirty secret. Oblivious, he marries the eldest daughter, Eugenia (Patsy Kensit), and makes a professional alliance with the tutor of the young Alabaster children, Matty Crompton (Kristin Scott Thompson), a severe and exciting young woman who burns with ethical and sexual passion. Director Philip Haas, working with his wife, Belinda, has adapted a marvelous 1992 A.S. Byatt novella, shrewdly preserving Byatt's volatile mix of science, sex, and Victorian class warfare. (Denby; 2/5/95) (1 hr. 57 mins.; NR) *Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Anne Frank Remembered—Jon Blair's documentary, which was made in collaboration with the Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, offers little in the way of revelation–we seem to be getting the official view, as in a museum publication. But the testimony of the now elderly women who knew Anne Frank as a girl and who helped the Frank family, at considerable risk, is extraordinarily moving. (Denby; 3/25/96) (2 hrs. 2 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Antonia's Line—A multigenerational story about four women and their various struggles with men. Written and directed by Marleen Gorris. In Dutch with English subtitles. (1 hr. 44 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema 3.*

Babe—A wonderful fable about a pig (Babe) who doesn't fit in with all the other animals on his farm. So he defies convention and dares to become a sheepdog. Directed by Chris Noonan. (1 hr. 31 mins.; G) *Manhattan Twin.*

Beautiful Girls—Matt Dillon gives a lovely performance as Tommy, a former high-school star who spends his nights plowing snow; his old girlfriend (Lauren Holly) won't stop pursuing him, and he doesn't have the strength to resist her—a sick situation that leaves his regular girlfriend (Mira Sorvino) dieting herself into anorexia. Tim Hutton plays a morose cocktail-hour piano player who left town, flopped, and has now returned; Michael Rapaport is a misogynist dope who dreams of supermodels. These young men are often pathetic, and the movie (written by Scott Rosenberg and directed by Ted Demme) looks at them with affectionate rue. Rosenberg and Demme nod toward feminism and accomplished women, but they also hold to the dreary idea that men are rhapsodists and fantasists, whereas women represent the solid earth of family and work. Some date movie! It's time, perhaps, to retire the sentimental genre of male-bonding movies. (Denby; 2/26/96) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center.*

★**The Birdcage**—Director Mike Nichols and writer Elaine May have set this remake of *La Cage aux Folles* in Miami's South Beach. Above the Birdcage club live Armand (Robin Williams) and Albert (Nathan Lane), who have been together through so many versions and productions that they easily qualify as the world's most famous married couple. Armand's son is about to be married to the daughter of an ultraconservative couple (the bride's father, played by Gene Hackman, is a right-wing senator), and Armand and Albert have to put on a respectable show for the parents. Williams gives one of his most restrained and beautiful performances; he's the soul of the movie, a hardworking husband in love with a funny hysteric whom he will take care of till his dying day. Armand and Albert put on a memorable and hilarious dinner party for the senator and his wife, and the loveliest thing about this scene is that caricature turns to benevolent farce. When the senator finds himself charmed by a man dressed as a woman and even becomes jealous of the woman's "husband," he is softened by absurdity. Opposites suddenly recognize each other as soulmates, and from this recognition flows reconciliation. (Denby; 3/11/96) (1 hr. 57 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street East; Chelsea; Baronet/Coronet; Criterion Center; Orpheum; Lincoln Square; Metro Cinema.*

Festival
The Spy Who Loved Us

It's a scenario now most commonly seen in rap videos, but Sean Connery's 007 pioneered this kind of partying. Relive the original mack daddy's glory days during '6 with 007,' a showcase of vintage Bond, including *You Only Live Twice,* above. At the Walter Reade, April 7–10.

★**Broken Arrow**—If you've never experienced a Hong Kong action movie, you might as well see this John Woo film. Woo has moved to Hollywood, so *Broken Arrow* takes place in the Arizona desert and features stars like John Travolta and Christian Slater. There's sort of a plot (about a nihilistic Air Force pilot and a couple of stolen nukes), but none of that means much. What matters here is movement: not only is everyone and everything moving, but everything moves in relation to other things (car, trains, helicopters) that are moving. People jump, tumble, leap, fall, drop from planes, bridges, and moving trains. The movie is a paradise of kinetic bravura—sheer air ballet—and the gross realities of pain, blood and dust never intrude for a second. (Denby; 2/26/96) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *23rd Street West Triplex; Movieplex 42; 86th Street.*

Carried Away—A middle-aged teacher (Dennis Hopper), mired in a stale relationship with a local widow (Amy Irving) who desperately wants to marry him, becomes passionately involved with a 17-year-old student. Directed by Bruno Barreto. (1 hr. 44 mins.; R) *Village East; Eastside Playhouse; Lincoln Square.*

The Celluloid Closet—An engaging documentary about Hollywood's treatment and depiction of gays and lesbians in film. Based on Vito Russo's acclaimed book. (1 hr. 41 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

★**Chungking Express**—Thirty years ago, Jean-Luc Godard identified his youthful characters as "the children of Marx and Coca-Cola"; writer-director Wong Kar-Wai's characters might be called the children of global hypercapitalism and Coca-Cola. *Chungking Express* was shot mostly at night inside a vast network of markets in the Hong Kong tourist district. This, we gather, is the future: a shopping-concourse Babel where the many languages and identities are held together, momentarily, the exchange of goods, a chance meeting of interest and desire. Wong tells separate stories about two lonely Hong Kong policemen, each trying to cope with the loss of his girlfriend. In the first, a young cop known only by his badge

Photograph by Photofest.

number (223) decides to wait a month for his girl to come back to him. She left on April 1, so every day he buys a can of pineapple (her favorite food) with an expiration date of May 1. When he runs out of cans to buy, he'll know the affair is over. In the second story, a flight attendant, having decided to dump her policeman boyfriend, No. 663 (Tony Leung), leaves the key to his apartment at the fast-food stand where he stops every night. A strange girl who works there becomes obsessed with the abandoned cop; she takes the key and repeatedly goes to his apartment, brightening the place up. On the whole, Wong seems more at home with solipsistic characters, dreaming their time away, than with men and women together. When the policeman and his admirer finally face each other in his apartment, they can hardly speak. *Chungking Express* is charming and right up to the second; its theme is the transiency, the fleetingness, of life in the present. (Denby; 3/25/96) (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Carnegie Hall Cinema.*

★City Hall—We are taken through a crisis in the mayorship of John Pappas (Al Pacino), a shrewd politician who is half Mario Cuomo, half Fiorello La Guardia. On a rainy day, under the El in Brooklyn, a small black boy is accidentally killed in a shoot-out between a cop and a minor mafioso. Pappas's deputy mayor, Kevin Calhoun (John Cusack) runs through the city bureaus and agencies trying to figure out what went wrong. The emotional heart of the movie is the relationship between the mayor and his young deputy; Pappas directs Kevin, advises him, but also performs for him, for he sees his younger self in Kevin. This is a wonderful role for Cusack; he has authority now, and his Kevin, political to the fingertips, has real drive and intelligence, so his opinion is worth having. And his disillusion is worth grieving over. (Denby; 2/19/96) (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *59th Street East.*

Dead Man Walking—A few minutes of Sean Penn's performance and you know he's got the role of Louisiana death-row inmate Matthew Poncelet down right. He defines "shifty"; he's mean, cut-off, mocking. His Poncelet tries to bully and seduce a nun, Sister Helen Préjean (Susan Sarandon) who takes an interest in his case; when she proves to be tougher than he thought, he slowly opens up to her. Based on a book by the actual Helen Préjean, this is the story of Matthew Poncelet's redemption and death. Poncelet has been convicted of murdering two teenagers, and as Sister Helen defends him, she takes abuse from the parents of the dead kids. Robbins observes the parents' rage neutrally, without turning them into vengeful hysterics. But at the end, as nun and murderer reach out to each other in the death chamber, the filmmakers blow the case they are plainly making against capital punishment. The implication is that Poncelet shouldn't be executed because he has accepted God and may become a good man. But if you are truly against capital punishment, you're against executing the redeemed and unredeemed alike. (Denby; 1/8/96) (2 hrs. 5 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Olympia Cinemas.*

Denise Calls Up—A comedy about seven young professionals who conduct every aspect of their lives over the phone. With Tim Daly and Liev Schrieber. Written and directed by Hal Salwen. (1 hr. 20 mins.; PG-13) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Diabolique—The 1954 original, directed with devastating precision by Henri-Georges Clouzot, was set in a boys' school outside Paris. Two women in thrall to the school's sadistic master—his religious wife and his knowing and tough-souled mistress—

Ground Rules:

These brief reviews, where noted, are condensed versions of reviews by David Denby...A ★ denotes a current release that *New York* recommends, ranging from best-of-the-year picks to worthy curios to flawed movies with one outstanding element...Reviews are followed by the Manhattan theaters where the film is playing. For movie listings online see the last page of this section.

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conspire to murder him, with unexpected consequences. This remake, directed by Jeremiah Chechik *(Benny & Joon)*, puts new seats on an old chassis, and nothing feels quite right—not the school, now placed outside Pittsburgh; not the casting of the very urban and proletarian Chazz Palminteri as the school's menacing director; not the performance, as the religious wife, of Isabelle Adjani, who looks puffy as a cloud and is so infuriatingly tremulous that one often wishes *she* were the corpse. The new movie is more explicit sexually but less interesting, and unclear on so many small points that the plot becomes less a series of startling revelations than an awkward, complicated burden that has to be dragged from thrill to thrill. (Denby; 4/1/96) (1 hr. 46 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Chelsea; Murray Hill Cinemas; Ziegfeld; Orpheum; Tower East; Lincoln Square; Olympia Cinemas.*

Executive Decision—Six military operatives board a hijacked plane in midair and attempt to defuse a bomb loaded with nerve gas. With Kurt Russell and Steven Seagal. Directed by Stuart Baird. (2 hrs. 15 mins.; R) *Village East; 19th Street East; 34th Street Showplace; Criterion Center; Movieplex 42; Gemini Twin; Orpheum; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum; Nova.*

Faithful—A comedy about a devoted housewife (Cher) whose husband has hired a hitman to kill her. With Ryan O'Neal and Chazz Palminteri. Directed by Paul Mazursky. (1 hr. 31 mins.; R). *Area theaters.*

A Family Thing—A drama about a middle-aged white Southerner (Robert Duvall) who, after learning his natural mother was black, sets out to find his half-brother. With James Earl Jones. Directed by Richard Pierce. (1 hr. 50 mins.; PG-13) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; Beekman; Orpheum; Nova; Regency.*

★**Fargo**—In the dead of winter, a car drives toward us through a whiteness so enveloping that we cannot tell where ground and air meet. The brilliant opening shot of Fargo—a devastating new comedy-thriller from Joel and Ethan Coen—suggests something unspeakably sinister. The film is about Jerry Lundegaard, a Minneapolis auto salesman who hires two thugs to kidnap his wife. Why? So he can cop part of the ransom money his rich father-in-law will pony up to get his daughter back, of course. He arrives in a roadhouse north of Minneapolis and meets two thugs, one of them a jumpy little creep (Steve Buscemi) and the other a monosyllabic, barely conscious stone killer of indeterminate Scandinavian origin. Buscemi's punk is highly puzzled by Jerry's scheme to have his wife kidnapped and then collect part of the ransom himself. Why doesn't Jerry just *ask* his father-in-law for the money? Buscemi's demand that crime make sense becomes a running joke in this peculiar north-country world, in which the conversational engine turns over and over but never really catches fire. As the Coens see it, people in northern Minnesota are so devoted to surface pleasantness that they don't notice the dark abyss opening at their feet. Joel Coen (who directed) stages the scenes as a deadpan comedy of squareness—but just when the satire is approaching burlesque, Frances McDormand turns up as police chief Marge Gunderson, and we see that blandness may have a hidden meaning. *Fargo* is not completely an exercise in attitude; it's a fable of good and evil, in which the pregnant Marge gets to restore order, one syllable at a time. ((Denby; 3/18/96)) (1 hr. 38 mins.; R) *Art Greenwich Twin; 19th Street East; New York Twin; Lincoln Square.*

Flirting with Disaster—A comedy about a young man (Ben Stiller) searching for his biological parents. Directed by David O. Russell. (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) *Village East; Chelsea; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Lincoln Square.*

Flower of My Secret—In Pedro Almodóvar's latest comedy, Marisa Paredes plays a romance novelist who finds it impossible to write when her marriage falls apart. In Spanish with English subtitles. (1 hr. 40 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*

Frisk—A young man obsessed with violent sex is tracked down by his ex-lover and brother. Directed by Todd Verow. (1 hr. 23 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema.*

Girl 6—Just as in some of his earlier movies (*Mo' Better Blues, Crookyln*), Spike Lee can't seem to grab ahold of the story he wants to tell. The movie begins as a slapdash, semi-satirical comedy about an aspiring young actress (Theresa Randle) trying to get ahead in New York. No one wants to give her work, and she finally takes a job doing phone sex, where she's given the title Girl 6. The phone-sex company works out of a high-rise corporate building, and it's funny that the girls sit under fluorescent light in front of computers and refer to themselves as "telecommunications sales representatives." But only for a while. We don't get too far into the phone-sex episodes before we realize that the movie has mysteriously died, and not all of Lee's energy and innovation can bring it back to life. As always, Lee throws in fantasy episodes and street sequences, but the idea that would unify all the whirling fragments and vignettes never emerges. We are left with very little except the idea that phone sex isn't much of a life for an aspiring actress. But who thought it was? (Denby; 4/1/96) (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Waverly; 19th Street East; Murray Hill Cinemas; Criterion Center; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum; 84th Street Six; Plaza Twin.*

Hellraiser 4: Bloodline—The latest in horror from Clive Barker. Directed by Alan Smithee. (1 hr. 30 mins.; R) *Astor Plaza; Movieplex 42.*

Homeward Bound II—Two dogs and a cat get separated from their owners at an airport and find themselves lost in San Francisco. With the voices of Michael J. Fox, Sally Field, Sinbad, and Bob Ucker. Directed by David R. Ellis. (1 hr. 29 mins.; G) *86th Street East; 84th Street Six.*

If Lucy Fell—Lucy (Sarah Jessica Parker) and Joe (Eric Schaeffer), friends since college, are both pushing 30 and on the verge of becoming morose and bitter, so they make a desperate attempt to find love with other partners. The film, written and directed by Schaeffer, is hyperconscious in a way that's often trying—some of the knowing little jokes fall awfully flat. Schaeffer dominates, and with his hair falling in his face, his moods varying between antic showing-off and utter solemnity, he stops the movie cold more than once. But Sarah Jessica Parker is something to see; she's developed an ingratiating comic style. (Denby; 3/25/96) (1 hr. 33 mins.; R) *Gemini Twin.*

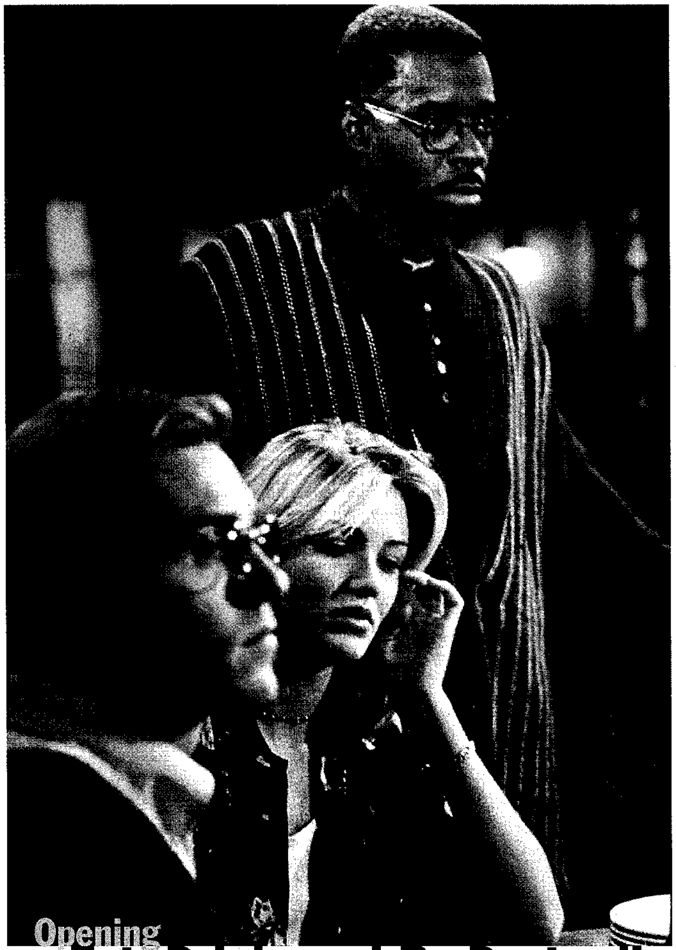
It's My Party—Eric Roberts portrays a young man who, shortly before succumbing to AIDS, hosts a two-day party for his family, friends, and an unexpected guest. With Gregory Harrison. Written and directed by Randal Kleiser. (1 hr. 49 mins.; R) *Angelika Film Center; Lincoln Square.*

Jack & Sarah—Richard E. Grant plays a single father who falls in love with the young American (Samantha Mathis) he's hired to care for his baby daughter. Written and directed by Tim Sullivan. (1 hr. 50 mins.; R) *First & 62nd St. Cinema; 62nd and Broadway.*

L'America—Gianni Amelio's tale of two Italian entrepreneurs (Enrico Lo Verso and Michele Placido) who attempt to take advantage of the political and economic upheaval in post-Communist Albania. Winner of Italy's Nastri D'Argento for Best Picture and Best Director. (1 hr. 56 mins.; NR) *Film Forum.*

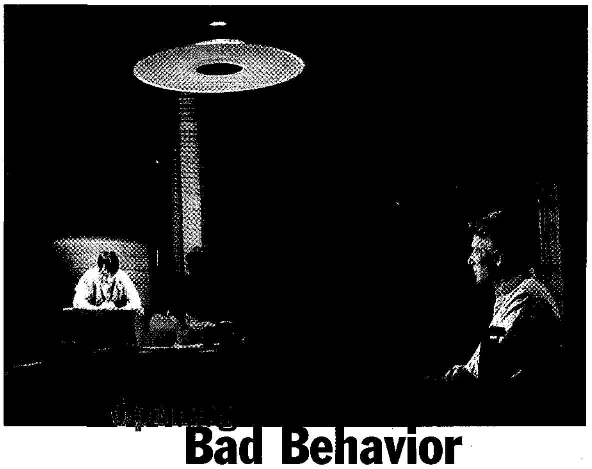
La Haine—A trio of alienated young men—a Jew (Vincent Cassel), an Arab (Said Taghmaoui), and a black (Hubert Kounde)—spend a very long day lounging around, brawling, pulling off minor drug deals, and attempting to see a friend brutalized by police after a riot. The young director, Mathieu Kassovitz, is very talented: He shoots in black-and-white, often with a handheld camera, and the movie captures the moody recklessness, the volatile, offhand brutality and loyalty of the 'hood, French-style. Kassovitz, however, takes cool to the point of meaninglessness. We never find out why there's been a riot in the projects, why the young men have no work, no hopes, no interests–or even how three men from such different backgrounds can get along so well. The movie is powerful but irritatingly vague. (Denby; 2/12/96) (1 hr. 34 mins.; NR) *Angelika 57.*

Land and Freedom—In thirties Barcelona, a young man (Ian Hart) finds himself torn between the Communist Party and the woman he has fallen in love with. Directed by Ken Loach. (1 hr. 45 mins.; NR) *Quad Cinema; Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.*



Opening
Eat, Drink, and Be Dastardly

In 'The Last Supper' (opening April 5), Ron Eldard, Cameron Diaz, and Courtney B. Vance (left to right) play liberal grad students whose weekly, politically charged dinner parties always reach a morbidly satisfying denouement.



Bad Behavior

Richard Gere (above), always best when he plays characters with a scummy edge ('American Gigolo,' 'Internal Affairs'), stars as a vainglorious attorney who becomes invested in helping a former altar-boy beat a murder rap in 'Primal Fear' (opening April 3).

Last Summer in the Hamptons—Three generations of an acting dynasty convene at their annual summer retreat for the last time. Starring the late Viveca Lindfors. Directed by Henry Jaglom. (1 hr. 45 mins.; R) *Angelika 57.*

The Last Supper—A black comedy about a group of liberal college grad students whose politically charged dinner parties always reach a morbidly satisfying end. Directed by Stacy Title. (1 hr. 24 mins.; R) *Area theaters.*

★**Leaving Las Vegas**—Ben Sanderson (Nicolas Cage) is drinking himself to death, and spectacular boozing is just a given fact of his existence. Having dispensed with the usual suspense of such movies (when will the hero hit bottom and pull himself out of it?), director Mike Figgis is free to open his film to mystery and art. After making a bonfire of his belongings, Ben heads for Las Vegas, where he meets the one girl for him, a good-looking hooker named Sera (Elisabeth Shue). We don't need explanations as to why she falls in love with Ben; we can see that she's touched by him. He needs tending, and her taking care of him is a way of leaving prostitution without leaving it. Figgis accepts Ben and Sera with something like awe: The doomed nature of their love transfigures it. What's fascinating about Cage's performance is the mental process of a man tearing away at an old self and building a new one over nothing. Shue is overwhelmingly erotic, and she pulls off moments that some of the most famous movie actresses of the past might not have attempted. *Leaving Las Vegas* is absent of lamentation and refuses to grieve over a wasted life. It's the most accomplished American movie of the year. (Denby; 11/13/95) (1 hr. 52 mins.; R) *Village East; 34th Street Showplace; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square.*

Little Indian, Big City—A successful French businessman travels to South America to seek a divorce from his estranged wife and discovers that he has a son. Starring Thierry Lhermitte, Miou Miou, and Ludwig Briand. Written and directed by Herve Palud. (1 hr. 30 mins.; PG) *Embassy 2–4; Sutton; 86th Street East.*

Mr. Holland's Opus—Richard Dreyfuss stars as a musician who somewhat unwillingly becomes a teacher—and therein finds his greatest satisfaction. Directed by Stephen Herek. (2 hrs. 25 mins.; PG) *Sutton.*

Neurosia: 50 Years of Perversity—A satire, by German director Rosa von Praunheim, that has billed itself as "the gay *Citizen Kane.*" (1 hr. 27 mins.; NR) *Cinema Village 12th St.*

Oliver & Company—The re-release of Disney's animated tale of an orphaned kitten's misadventures. With the voices of Billy Joel, Bette Midler, Cheech Marin, and Dom DeLuise. Directed by George Scribner. (1 hr. 13 mins.; G) *Village East; 23rd Street West Triplex; Guild 50th Street; Sutton; 86th Street East; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum; Plaza .*

The Postman—As the film opens, the late Massimo Troisi's Mario Ruoppolo has no one to speak to. And then the island where Mario lives is visited by a kind of god—the exiled Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. Mario, who becomes his postman, suddenly cannot stop speaking, and the poet, at first brusque, gradually gets drawn into the miracle of Mario's awakening. Directed by Michael Radford. In Italian. (Denby; 6/14/95) (1 hr. 49 mins.; PG) *Village East; Chelsea; Carnegie Hall Cinema; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; UA East; Plaza Twin.*

Primal Fear—Richard Gere stars as a cutthroat, vainglorious defense lawyer who becomes invested in helping his client beat a murder rap. With John Mahoney and Andre Braugher. Directed by Gregory Hoblit. (2 hrs. 10 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; Astor Plaza; New York Twin; UA East; 84th Street Six; New Coliseum.*

Race the Sun—A bunch of poor Hawaiian kids—inspired by their spunky teacher—decide to build a solar-powered car and ride it through Australia. With Halle Berry and Jim Belushi. Directed by Charles T. Kanganis. (1 hr. 45 mins.; PG) *Village East; Embassy 1; Manhattan Twin.*

Rumble in the Bronx—A crossover vehicle for Hong Kong action star Jackie Chan that fails to do him justice. Chan is a martial-arts master who deftly blends breathtaking action, screwball setups and physical comedy into the smoothest of mixtures, but here, nothing seems to work. Perhaps the film loses something in the dubbing (most Chan films shown here are subtitled). Much of the problem, however, lies in the setting and what passes for a storyline: Keung (Chan) comes to the Bronx to visit his uncle and has to fight a lot of New York punks, who themselves look and act like a tourist's idea of New York—style thugs. And Chan doesn't get to display his martial-arts chops to the best effect, because here he's fighting guys who can only throw the crudest of punches. It's a big, garish cartoon; though we never feel like Chan's above it, he deserves better. (1 hr. 27 mins.; R) *Village Theatre VII; Criterion Center; Movieplex 42; Plaza Twin.*

★**Sense and Sensibility**—Emma Thompson adapted Jane Austen's novel herself, and has brought the material as close to conventional romantic comedy as possible without betraying the anxieties lying behind the story: In the England of the 1800s, women without a dowry enjoy very few options. Two wealthy young men make advances to the Dashwood sisters (Thompson plays the elder, Elinor, and Kate Winslet is Marianne), and then turn away, causing the women extreme anguish. Taiwanese director Ang Lee stages the walks, dinners, teas, and balls very directly, without pomp; the emotional and erotic goings-on become intimately connected to the flowing lawns and great rooms. And Thompson and Lee get the relationship between the two sisters right, the play of strength and weakness, candor and concealment—sense and sensibility merging in each sister, until both Marianne and Elinor become complete human beings. (Denby; 12/18/95) (2 hrs. 15 mins.; PG) *First & 62nd St. Cinema; Lincoln Square; Plaza Twin.*

Sgt. Bilko—Steve Martin stars in this comedy based on the sixties television sitcom. With Dan Aykroyd, Phil Hartman, and Glenne Headly. Directed by Jonathan Lynn. (1 hr. 32 mins.; PG-13) *Waverly; 34th Street Showplace; Chelsea; National Twin; First & 62nd St. Cinema; Orpheum; 84th Street Six.*

The Starmaker—A would-be talent scout scours remote Sicilian villages with a camera and the promise that those he films will become famous. Directed by Giuseppe Tornatore (*Cinema Paradiso*). (1 hr. 53 mins.; R) *Paris Theater.*

A Thin Line Between Love and Hate—A hip-hop comedy about a nightclub owner who gets involved with the wrong woman. With Martin Lawrence—who also directed—and Bobby Brown. (1 hr. 48 mins.; R) *Area theaters.*

Up Close & Personal—Michelle Pfeiffer plays a tense, ambitious Reno weathergirl who fakes a demo tape and gets an interview at a bustling Miami TV station, where she falls under the tutelage of Robert Redford's newsroom pro, a man of great integrity who is mysteriously on his way down. Redford bullies his protégée, but he always helps her; despite many missteps, she flourishes as he sinks. *Up Close & Personal* is big, dull, and familiar; the story is another go-round for *A Star is Born,* one of whose earlier versions was written by the same screenwriting team (Joan Didion and John Gregory Dunne). Directed by Jon Avnet. (Denby; 3/4/96) (2 hrs. 4 mins.; PG-13). *Village East; Cinema I, II, Third Ave.; Embassy 2-4,*

★**The Young Poisoner's Handbook**— Writer-director Ben Ross linked up with another writer, Jeff Rawle, who shared his interest in an actual murderer—Graham Young, the chem-lab wizard who killed a number of people and became a Brit tabloid celebrity of the sixties and seveties. Graham is 14 when we first see him, a nerdish boy from the London suburbs with pale skin and wide-open eyes. Hugh O'Conor, who was the young Christy Brown in *My Left Foot,* plays Graham with the polite manners of a dry-goods clerk. But what Graham lacks is the slightest empathy; he puts people in agony and looks on in wonder, as if the spectacle had nothing to do with him. Methodically, he begins to eliminate the members of his ghastly family, a group of nasty vulgarians completely unconcious of themselves or of the blankly vicious boy who lives among them. Against every scruple, we root for Graham; he's a monster, but he's also weirdly appealing. When he gets caught, and sent to the state funny farm, the comedy deepens, and at the end, Graham thaws a little and tries to experience the pain he has caused others. But despite the shift in meaning, *The Young Poisoner's Handbook* maintains its unearthly poise. This is a remarkable first feature; if the experience doesn't hurt too much, you may find yourself laughing all the way through it. (Denby; 3/4/96) (1 hr. 39 mins.; NR) *Angelika Film Center; Cinema 3.*

Manhattan

Below 14th Street

Angelika Film Center—18 W. Houston St. (995-2000) *Antonia's Line; Beautiful Girls; Chungking Express; Flower of My Secret; It's My Party; The Young Poisoner's Handbook.*

Art Greenwich Twin—Greenwich Ave. at 12th St. (505-CINE#616) *Fargo; A Family Thing.*

Cinema Village 12th St.—22 E. 12th St. (924-3363) *Ghost in the Shell.* Opening 4/5: *Neurosia: 50 Years of Perversity.*

Film Forum—209 W. Houston St. (727-8110) Opening 3/27: *L'America; Sweet Nothing; Nico-Icon; Taxi Driver.* (See also "Museums, Societies, Etc.")

Quad Cinema—34 W. 13th St. (255-8800) *Anne Frank Remembered; Denise Calls Up; Frisk; Land and Freedom.*

Village East—189 Second Ave., at 12th St. (529-6799) *Up Close and Personal; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Carried Away; Executive Decision; Flirting with Disaster; Leaving Las Vegas; Oliver & Company; The Postman; Race the Sun.*

Village Theatre VII—66 Third Ave., at 11th St. (982-0400) *Dead Man Walking; Diabolique; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage; The Celluloid Closet.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Waverly—323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (505-CINE#603) *Girl 6; Sgt. Bilko.*

14th-41st Streets

19th Street East—890 Broadway, at 19th St. (260-8000) *A Family Thing; Executive Decision; Fargo; Girl 6.*

23rd Street West Triplex—333 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#614) *Up Close and Personal; All Dogs Go to*

Photograph by Ron Phillips/Paramount Pictures.

Heaven 2; Broken Arrow; Oliver & Company.

34th Street East—241 E. 34th St. (505-CINE#586) *The Birdcage.*

34th Street Showplace—238 E. 34th St. (532-5544) *Executive Decision; Leaving Las Vegas; Sgt. Bilko.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Chelsea—260 W. 23rd St. (505-CINE#597) *Diabolique; Flirting with Disaster; The Postman; Primal Fear; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Murray Hill Cinemas—160 E. 34th St. (689-6548) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Girl 6.*

42nd-60th Streets

59th Street East—239 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#615) *City Hall.*

Angelika 57—225 W. 57th St. (586-1900) *La Haine; Last Summer in the Hamptons.*

Astor Plaza—44th St. bet. Broadway. and Eighth Ave. (869-8340) *Hellraiser 4: Bloodline.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Baronet/Coronet—993 Third Ave., bet. 59th and 60th Sts. (505-CINE#608) *The Birdcage.*

Carnegie Hall Cinema—887 Seventh Ave., bet. 56th and 57th Sts. (505-CINE#593) *Chungking Express; The Postman.*

Cinema 3—2 W. 59th St. (505-CINE#596) *The Young Poisoner's Handbook.* Opening 4/3: *Antonia's Line.*

Cinema I, II, Third Ave.—1001 Third Ave., at 60th St. (753-6022) *Up Close and Personal; Flirting with Disaster; The Postman.*

Criterion Center—1514 Broadway, bet. 44th and 45th Sts. (354-0900) *A Family Thing; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Rumble in the Bronx; The Birdcage.*

Crown Gotham—969 Third Ave., bet. 57th and 58th Sts. (759-2262) *Restoration.*

Eastside Playhouse—919 Third Ave., bet. 55th and 56th Sts. (755-3020) *Carried Away.*

Embassy 1—1560 Broadway, bet. 46th and 47th Sts. (302-0494) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Race the Sun.*

Embassy 2-4—701 Seventh Ave., bet. 47th and 48th Sts. (730-7262) *Up Close and Personal; Don't Be a Menace . . .; From Dusk Till Dawn; Little Indian, Big City; Nixon.*

Guild 50th Street—33 W. 50th St. (757-2406) *Oliver & Company.*

Manhattan Twin—220 E. 59th St. (505-CINE#590) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Babe; Race the Sun.*

Movieplex 42—244 W. 42nd St. (997-7522) *Broken Arrow; Executive Decision; From Dusk Till Dawn; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Rumble in the Bronx; Unforgettable.*

National Twin—1500 Broadway, bet. 43rd and 44th Sts. (505-CINE#589) *Casino; Sgt. Bilko.*

Paris Theater—4 W. 58th St. (980-5656) *The Starmaker.*

Sutton—205 E. 57th St. (759-1411) *Little Indian, Big City; Mr. Holland's Opus; Oliver & Company.*

Worldwide Cinemas—340 W. 50th St. (505-CINE#610) *The Bridges of Madison County; Get Shorty; Heat; Richard III; The American President; Waiting to Exhale.*

Ziegfeld—141 W. 54th St. (505-CINE#602) *Diabolique.*

61st Street and Above, East Side

68th Street Playhouse—1164 Third Ave., at 68th St. (734-0302) *Mighty Aphrodite.*

86th Street—125 E. 86th St. (505-CINE#604) *Broken Arrow; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2.*

86th Street East—210 E. 86th St. (249-1144) *Homeward Bound II; Little Indian, Big City; Oliver & Company.*

Beekman—1254 Second Ave., bet. 65th and 66th Sts. (505-CINE#606) *A Family Thing.*

First & 62nd St. Cinema—400 E. 62nd St. (505-CINE#957) *Dead Man Walking; Girl 6; Jack & Sarah; Leaving Las Vegas; Sense and Sensibility; Sgt. Bilko.*

Gemini Twin—1210 Second Ave., at 64th St. (832-1670) *Executive Decision; If Lucy Fell.*

New York Twin—1271 Second Ave., bet. 66th and 67th Sts. (744-7339) *Fargo.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Orpheum—1538 Third Ave., at 86th St. (876-2400) *Up Close and Personal; A Family Thing; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Tower East—1230 Third Ave., bet. 71st and 72nd Sts. (879-1313) *Diabolique.*

UA East—1629 First Ave., at 85th St. (249-5100) *The Postman.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

61st Street and Above, West Side

62nd and Broadway—1871 Broadway, at 62nd St. (505-CINE#864) *Jack & Sarah.*

84th Street Six—2310 Broadway, at 84th St. (877-3600) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Homeward Bound II; Oliver & Company; Sgt. Bilko.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas—30 Lincoln Plaza, on Broadway bet. 62nd and 63rd Sts. (757-2280) *Angels & Insects; Denise Calls Up; Flower of My Secret; Land and Freedom; Mighty Aphrodite; The Celluloid Closet.*

Lincoln Square—1992 Broadway, at 68th St. (336-5000) *Up Close and Personal; Across the Sea of Time; Carried Away; Dead Man Walking; Diabolique; Fargo; Flirting with Disaster; Into the Deep; It's My Party; Leaving Las Vegas; Sense and Sensibility; The Birdcage; Wings of Courage.*

Metro Cinema—2626 Broadway, bet. 99th and 100th Sts. (505-CINE#609) *The Birdcage.*

New Coliseum—701 W. 181st St. (740-1545) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Don't Be a Menace . . .; Executive Decision; From Dusk Till Dawn; Oliver & Company.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Nova—3589 Broadway, bet. 147th and 148th Sts. (862-5728) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision.*

Olympia Cinemas—2770 Broadway, bet. 106th and 107th Sts. (505-CINE#613) *Diabolique; Dead Man Walking.*

Regency—1987 Broadway, bet. 67th and 68th Sts. (505-CINE#585) *A Family Thing.*

Bronx

Area Code 718

Bay Plaza—2210 Bartow Ave., behind Bay Plaza Mall (320-3020) *Up Close and Personal; A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Broken Arrow; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun; Rumble in the Bronx; Sense and Sensibility; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Concourse Plaza—214 E. 161th St. (588-8800) *Ed ; A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Oliver & Company; Rumble in the Bronx; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Interboro—3462 E. Tremont Ave., nr. Bruckner Blvd. (792-2100) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Girl 6; The Postman; Race the Sun.*

Riverdale—5683 Riverdale Ave., at 259th St. (884-9514) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; The Birdcage.*

Whitestone—2505 Bruckner Blvd., at Hutchinson River Pkwy. (409-9037) *Ed ; A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Broken Arrow; Diabolique; Don't Be a Menace . . .; Executive Decision; From Dusk Till Dawn; Girl 6; Hellraiser 4: Bloodline; Homeward Bound II; Muppet Treasure Island; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun; Rumble in the Bronx; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Brooklyn

Area Code 718

Alpine—6817 Fifth Ave., at 69th St. (777-FILM#580) *Up Close and Personal; Diabolique; Fargo; Oliver & Company; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Brooklyn Heights—70 Henry St. (596-7070) *Executive Decision; The Birdcage; Toy Story.*

Canarsie—9310 Ave. L, at E. 93rd St. (251-0700) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Oliver & Company; The Birdcage.*

Cobble Hill—265 Court St. (596-9113) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Fargo; Flirting with Disaster; Girl 6; Sgt. Bilko.*

Fortway—6720 Ft. Hamilton Pkwy., at 68th St. (777-FILM#578) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Dead Man Walking; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Homeward Bound II; Race the Sun; Rumble in the Bronx.* Opening 4/3: *A Thin Line Between Love and Hate; Faithful.*

Kenmore—Church Ave. nr. Flatbush Ave. (777-FILM#576) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Girl 6; Oliver & Company; Rumble in the Bronx.* Opening 4/3: *A Thin Line Between Love and Hate.*

Kent Triplex—Coney Island Ave. at Ave. H (338-3371) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Oliver & Company; The Birdcage.*

Kings Plaza—5201 Kings Plaza; Flatbush Ave. at Ave. U (777-FILM#579) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun.* Opening 4/3: *A Thin Line Between Love and Hate.*

Kingsway—Kings Hwy. at Coney Island Ave. (777-FILM#577) *Up Close and Personal; Dead Man Walking; Diabolique; Homeward Bound II; Sgt. Bilko;*

MEMORIAL
NERAL
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Opening

Paranoiac's Paradise

***The Deflowering* (with Holly Adams and Emmanuelle Chaulet, above), a futuristic fable about societal reaction to a highly contagious mutation of the AIDS virus, will be shown as part of *Multiple Futures* (opening April 12 at the Suffolk Street Lighthouse Cinema), a tongue-in-cheek anthology.**

Revival

Singin' in the Rain

Upon its release in France in 1964, Jacques Demy's *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (at Film Forum beginning April 5) was hailed as an instant classic—and nothing like it has been seen since. Beautifully tragic and insane with color, the film stars a 20-year-old Catherine Deneuve as Genevieve, a young shopgirl hopelessly in love with a local gas-station attendant who woos her, knocks her up, goes off to war, writes one noncommittal letter, and sends her flying into a secure yet loveless marriage with another man. Though the dialogue is striking in its simplicity, every single line—from fervent declarations of undying love to the most mundane of observations—is sung to composer Michel Legrand's fluid, continuous score, and every gesticulation is intricately choreographed. *Umbrellas* went on to win the Palme d'Or at Cannes, garner five Academy Award nominations, and play to sold-out houses around the world—yet by the mid-seventies, all existing prints were either severely damaged or missing. Demy located a tricolor negative in the late eighties but died before he could restore the film—so Deneuve, Legrand, and Demy's widow, director Agnès Varda, championed its restoration. Their tenacity alone is a tribute to the late visionary, who had struggled for years to get *Umbrellas* made. "All the producers [Jacques talked to] said, 'Who will pay to see people singing and crying in front of a gas pump?' " recalls Varda today. "But you know, Jacques was born in a gas station and raised in a garage—he used to say that his idea of heaven was café au lait, a croissant, and the smell of gasoline."

MAUREEN CALLAHAN

The Birdcage. Opening 4/3: *Faithful; Primal Fear.*

Marboro—6817 Bay Pkwy., at 69th St. (232-4000) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Race the Sun; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Metropolitan—392 Fulton St. (777-FILM#829) *Executive Decision; Girl 6; Oliver & Company.* Opening 4/3: *A Thin Line Between Love and Hate.*

Plaza Twin—314 Flatbush Ave., nr. Eighth Ave. (636-0170) *Chinese Ghost Story Part II; Girl 6; The Postman; Rumble in the Bronx; Sense and Sensibility; Trust.*

Ridgewood—55–27 Myrtle Ave., at Putnam Ave. (821-5993) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Oliver & Company; The Birdcage.*

The Movies at Sheepshead Bay—Knapp St. and Harkness Ave., off Belt Pkwy. (615-1700) *Up Close and Personal; A Family Thing; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Fargo; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun; Rumble in the Bronx; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Queens

Area Code 718

Astoria—28–60 Steinway St. (726-1279) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Rumble in the Bronx; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Bay Terrace—211–01 26th Ave. and Bell Blvd., Bayside (428-4040) *Up Close and Personal; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Oliver & Company; The Birdcage.*

Cinema 5—183–15 Horace Harding Expy., at 183rd St., Fresh Meadows (777-FILM#592) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Little Indian, Big City; Oliver & Company.*

Cinemart—106–03 Metropolitan Ave., at 72nd Rd., Forest Hills (261-2244) *Homeward Bound II; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun.*

Continental—70–20 Austin St., Forest Hills (544-1020) *Diabolique; Fargo; Flirting with Disaster.*

Crossbay—94–11 Rockaway Blvd., at Woodhaven Blvd., Ozone Park (848-1738) *Executive Decision; Girl 6; Homeward Bound II; Rumble in the Bronx.*

Crossbay II—92–10 Rockaway Blvd., at 93rd St., Ozone Park (641-5330) *A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Don't Be a Menace . . .; From Dusk Till Dawn; Oliver & Company; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Elmwood—57–02 Hoffman Dr., Elmhurst (429-4770) *A Family Thing; Girl 6; Homeward Bound II; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun.*

Forest Hills—107–16 Continental Ave., at Queens Blvd. (261-7866) *The Birdcage.*

Fresh Meadows—190–02 Horace Harding Blvd., at 190th St. (777-FILM#619) *Up Close and Personal; Diabolique; Fargo; Flirting with Disaster; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Jackson Triplex—82nd St. at Roosevelt Ave. (478-6777) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Executive Decision; The Birdcage.*

Main Street—72–66 Main St., Flushing (268-3636) *Sgt. Bilko; Girl 6.*

Midway—108–22 Queens Blvd., at 71st Ave., Forest Hills (261-8572) *Broken Arrow; Executive Decision; Sgt. Bilko.*

Movieworld—242–02 61st Ave., off Exit 31, Douglaston (423-7200) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Girl 6; Little Indian, Big City; Sense and Sensibility; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

North Shore Towers—27–10 Grand Central Pkwy., Floral Park (229-7702) *Angels & Insects; Antonia's Line; The White Balloon.*

Plaza —103–14 Roosevelt Ave., at 103rd St., Corona (639-0012) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Oliver & Company.*

Quartet—160–06 Northern Blvd., at 160th St., Flushing (359-6777) *A Family Thing; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Oliver & Company.*

Surfside—104th St., Rockaway (945-4632) *All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; The Birdcage.*

The Movies at Bayside—38–39 Bell Blvd., at 39th Ave. (225-7711) *Fargo; Girl 6; The Postman; Race the Sun; Sgt. Bilko.*

Trylon—98–81 Queens Blvd., at 66th Ave., Forest Hills (459-8944) *Up Close and Personal.*

Staten Island

Area Code 718

Atrium—680 Arthur Kill Road, nr. Richmond Ave., Eltingville (317-8300) *Diabolique; Executive Decision; Homeward Bound II; Leaving Las Vegas; Oliver & Company; The Postman; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.* Opening 4/3: *Primal Fear.*

Hylan Plaza—107 Mill Rd., at Hylan Blvd., New Dorp (351-0805) *Up Close and Personal; Diabolique; Executive Decision; The Birdcage.*

The Movies at Staten Island—141 E. Service Rd., at Victory Blvd., Travis (983-9600) *Up Close and Personal; A Family Thing; All Dogs Go to Heaven 2; Diabolique; Executive Decision; Fargo; Girl 6; Homeward Bound II; Little Indian, Big City; Oliver & Company; Race the Sun; Sgt. Bilko; The Birdcage.*

Museums, Societies, Etc.

American Museum of Natural History—Two IMAX films: *Destiny in Space* and *Titanica.* Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5650); $10 singly; $13 double feature Fri. and Sat. nights.

American Museum of the Moving Image—"The Essential Brando." 4/7: *Reflections in a Golden Eye* (1967) and *The Missouri Breaks* (1976). 3601 36th St., Astoria, Queens (entrance on 35th Ave.; 718-784-0077); $5.

Anthology Film Archives—4/5: *Fantomas* (1913), Parts I and II. 4/6: *Fantomas,* Parts III and IV. 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181); $7.

Brooklyn Museum—"Self-Discoveries: A Festival of Latin American Cinema." 4/5: *Jerico* (1990). 4/6 and 4/7: *One Way or Another* (1974). 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000, ext. 330); $6.

A Different Light—4/7: *The Lonely Lady* (1983). 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850); free.

Donnell Media Center—4/2: *A Boy and His Car* (1990) and *The Little Fugitive* (1952). 4/4: *Cinderella* (1986), *The Tender Tale of Cinderella Penguin* (1981), and *The Cruz Brothers and Miss Malloy* (1979). 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619); free.

Film Forum—Through 4/4: Herzog's *The Mystery of Kaspar Hauser* (1975). 3/5–3/25: *The Umbrellas of Cherbourg* (1964). 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110); $8.

Film Society of Lincoln Center—(The Walter Reade Theater)—4/1: "Lumière and Company," a tribute to the filmmaking pioneers. Through 4/4: "Olivier Assayas's Cinema of Abandon." 4/1–4/3: *Paris at Dawn* (1991). 4/1, 4/2, and 4/4: *A New Life* (1993). 4/3 and 4/4: *Cold Water* (1994). 4/5 and 4/6: William Wyler's *Ben Hur* (1959). 4/7–4/11: "6 With 007." 4/7: *Dr. No* (1962) and *From Russia With Love* (1963). 65 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600); $7.50.

French Institute—4/2: *Colonel Chabert* (1994). Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160); $7, $5.50 seniors.

Museum of Modern Art—Through 4/7: "1996 New Directors/New Films." 4/1: *When Mother Comes Home for Christmas* (1995). 4/1 and 4/3: *Parking* (1995) and *Guiltrip* (1995). 3/27 and 3/28: *Madagascar* (1994) with *Here and There* (1995) and *Child's Play* (1995). 4/2 and 4/4: *Violet* (1995) and *To Have (or Not)* (1995). 4/4 and 4/5: *Like Grains of Sand* (1995). 4/5 and 4/6: *Work* (1995) and *The Red Book* (1994). 4/6 and 4/7: *On the Beat* (1995) with *Domestic Disturbance* (1996), *The Arsonist* (1995) with *Extingue!* (1994), and *I Shot Andy Warhol* (1995). 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); $8.

National Museum of the American Indian—"North/South: Selections from the 1995 Native American Film Festival." Call for program info. 1 Bowling Green (825-6914); free.

Symphony Space—4/2: *Annie Hall* (1977) and *Wild Strawberries* (1957). 2537 Broadway (864-5400); $7.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Gregory J. Markopoulos." 4/3: *The Divine Damnation* (1968). 4/4: *Gammelion* (1968) and *(A)lter (A)ction* (1968). 4/5: *Hagiographia* (1970). 4/6: *Bliss* (1967), *Through a Lens Brightly: Mark Turbyfill* (1967), *Die Schachtel* (1968), *Sorrows* (1969), *Moment* (1970), and *The Olympian* (1969). 4/7: *Political Portraits* (1969), *The Mysteries* (1968), *Saint Actaeon* (1971), and *Index—Hans Richter* (1969). 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (717-0723); $8.

Movie Listings Online

***New York* Magazine Online (on CompuServe) now offers expanded movie listings, covering more than 250 theaters throughout New York City, Long Island, Westchester, northern New Jersey, and southern Connecticut. These listings, which are updated daily, also contain show times for all movies. To subscribe, call 1-800-305-3280. If you're already on CompuServe, you can find us at *go* NYMAG.**

art

De Kooning's Doors...Charles LeDray

Galleries

Solos

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Alan Berliner—Installations that utilize appropriated picture and sound sources; through 4/16. Sculpture Center, 167 E. 69th St. (879-3500).

Willem de Kooning—Paintings made between 1982 and 1986; 4/4–6/1. C & M, 45 E. 78th St. (861-0020).

Sheila Elias—Mixed-media paintings whose shapes and compositions suggest gardens; through 4/20. Barnard Biderman & Worth, 22 E. 72nd St. (772-2352).

Robert Graham—Three new cast-bronze sculptures of female nudes, and related prints; through 4/20. Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave. (744-2313).

Jean Hélion—Abstract and representational paintings and watercolors ranging in date from 1929 through the early eighties; 4/2–27. Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. (879-6606).

James McGurl—Realist paintings of scenes and landscapes in St. Thomas, the Arizona desert, and New England; through 4/13. Taggart, 48 E. 73rd St. (628-4000).

Joan Snyder—Recent abstract paintings that are built up of many strokes of color and incorporate pieces of velvet, plants, and other found materials; through 5/11. Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St. (535-8810).

57th Street Area

Milton Avery—A survey of paintings, from works the artist made on the Gaspé Peninsula in the summer of 1936 to paintings from his final summers on Cape Cod in the fifties and sixties, through 4/27, at Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124), and prints and related drawings, through 4/27, at Long, 24 W. 57th St. (397-2001).

Katherine Bowling—Paintings whose semi-abstract imagery evolves from Polaroid photographs of the woods surrounding the artist's home in upstate New York; 4/2–5/4. Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (245-2888).

Sue Coe—A retrospective of paintings and works on paper from the past decade celebrating the publication of the artist's book, *Dead Meat;* through 5/24. St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (245-6734).

Enzo Cucchi—Recent fresco paintings, fresco collages, and related drawings; through 4/27. Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (399-5510).

Jim Dine—150 mixed-media-on-paper drawings of classical heads; through 4/27. PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. (421-3292).

Leon Goldin—Abstract paintings and works on paper; through 4/20. Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave. (307-5730).

Susan Hauptman—Charcoal and pastel still lifes and self-portraits; through 4/27. Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St. (664-0907).

Al Held—New large-scale, black-and-white drawings in charcoal and graphite that depict complex systems of architectonic forms; 4/4–5/11. Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (752-0124).

Marina Karella—Paintings of the interior of the Café des Deux Garçons in France; through 4/18. McGrath, 20 W. 57th St. (956-3366).

Ellen K. Levy—Paintings of surreal architectural interiors; through 4/27. Associated American Artists, 20 W. 57th St. (399-5510).

Michael Mazur—Recent abstract paintings; 4/4–5/4. Ryan, 24 W. 57th St. (397-0669).

Portia Munson—An installation titled "The Garden," which transforms the gallery into a bedroom environment of inorganic floral objects; through 4/20. Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. (265-8876).

Anne-Françoise Potterat—Small-scale abstract paintings whose decorative motifs overlaid with diagrammatic compositions, symbols, and writing suggest light passing through a Persian mosque; through 4/22. Richart, 7 E. 55th St. (371-9369).

Thomas Schütte—The German artist's third exhibition at this gallery consists of new larger-than-life figures in cast aluminum and wooden table sculptures; through 4/20. Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. (977-7160).

Krzysztof Wodiczko—An ongoing multimedia research, performance, and design project titled "Xenology: Immigrant Instruments"; through 4/27. Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (315-0470).

SoHo and TriBeCa

Matthew Abbott/Melissa McGill—New paintings/New work. Through 4/27. Boesky and Callery, 51 Greene St. (941-9888).

Austin Ackles—Abstract paintings that take their inspiration from Asian painting and the artist's love of nature; through 4/20. Martz, 580 Broadway (334-3348).

Uta Barth—In her new "Field" series, the artist's photographic images of blurred cityscapes mimic a cinematic vocabulary, shifting a viewer's attention to his/her peripheral field of vision; through 4/20. Bonakdar, 130 Prince St. (925-8035).

Carmel Buckley/Robert Strati—Wall-hanging and floor sculptures of wire, Sculpey, and found materials/Fabric-covered wire sculptures that hang from the ceiling. Through 4/20. Room, 25 Thompson St. (226-1831).

Charles Le Dray—The artist, who is known for his miniature, impeccably detailed clothing pieces, has created a group of 2,000 hand-thrown ceramic pots, a rocking chair made of human bone, a baby basinette decorated with handmade lace and tatting, and copies of souvenirs from the 1961 Seattle World's Fair; 4/6–5/4. Gorney, 100 Greene St. (966-4480).

Pat Colville—Recent abstract paintings; through 4/20. Condeso/Lawler, 524 Broadway (219-1283).

Ford Crull—Gestural abstract paintings in which symbolic images—hearts, crosses, flowers, and fragments of the human figure—appear to float within layers of vivid color; 4/4–27. M-13, 72 Greene St. (925-3007).

Cheryl Donegan—An installation titled *Tent* that comprises three one-hour videotapes and three large-scale paintings; through 4/20. Basilico, 26 Wooster St. (966-1831).

Dan Flavin—A new horizontal sculpture that incorporates blue, green, red, pink, and yellow fluorescent lights; through 4/27. PaceWildenstein, 142 Greene St. (431-9224).

Caio Fonseca—Recent abstract paintings and works on paper; through 4/27. Cowles, 420 W. Broadway (925-3500).

Michel François—An installation of sculpture, photography, and video by the Belgian artist; through 4/20. Marcus, 578 Broadway (226-3200).

Gregory Green—Works that refer to strategies of empowerment in contempory global society, including the artist's version of a 30-foot booster rocket and an arsenal of incendiary devices; through 4/27. Protetch, 560 Broadway (966-5454).

Ground Rules:

Galleries are generally open Tues. through Sat., from between 10 and 11 to between 5 and 6.

With the Compliments of the
CENTURY 21 EXPOSITION
EXPOSITION
SEATTLE U.S.A. 1962
CENTURY 21

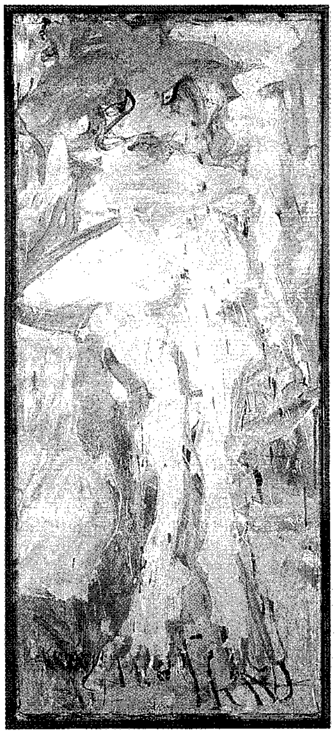
Talent

Though he's still making his Lilliputian, impeccably detailed "sculptures" of men's clothing, Charles LeDray has expanded his repertoire with life-size replicas of actual souvenirs from the 1962 Seattle World's Fair (a cigar box, above), 2,000 miniature ceramic pots, and a doll-size rocking chair made of human bone. At Jay Gorney Modern Art, 100 Greene Street; opens April 6.

Photograph courtesy of Jay Gorney Modern Art.

On View
The Doors

Willem de Kooning's fearsome *Woman I* of 1950–52, and the series of sharp-toothed, larger-than-life "bitch goddesses" that followed, remain among the more celebrated paintings of the twentieth century. But de Kooning also painted a second, important series of women in the mid-sixties that deserves to be far better known than it is. This one came about serendipitously. A shipment of doors that de Kooning had ordered for his vast new studio on Long Island proved to be hollow, not solid. A legendary stickler for quality (a German master craftsman handmade the baseboards in the studio), de Kooning rejected the doors, and they stood abandoned against a wall for months. Gradually, his eye became intrigued. How would a woman's body look if painted almost life-size on one of these doors?



The result, on display at the Whitney Museum through May 26, is the so-called "door" cycle, which includes a number of works on actual doors. With their thrusting nudity and distorted bodies—made all the more powerful by being squeezed into such narrow formats—the sixties women echo their iconic forebears. Look again, and one sees the emerging direction of de Kooning's late-sixties work—in a new celebration of flesh, in the dissolving of *Woman I*'s hard armature into curving, watery brushstrokes, in the thick, voluptuous presence of the paint itself. De Kooning himself had nothing but affection for his "door" women. He called the Whitney's *Woman Accabonac* "kind of funny-looking. . . . For myself, I think maybe she is a woman who makes hats."

Annalyn Swan

Don Gummer—New bronze sculptures; 4/5–27. Sperone Westwater, 121 Greene St. (431-3685).

David Kapp—New, large-scale paintings based on views from the artist's downtown studio; through 4/27. Beitzel, 102 Prince St. (219-2863).

Kcho—A sculpture constructed from found objects and natural materials that takes Brancusi's *Endless Column* as as its point of departure, by an artist who lives in Havana, Cuba; through 4/20. Gladstone, 99 Greene St. (431-3334).

Jonathan Lasker—New abstract paintings; through 4/27. Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. (431-3685).

Sandra Lerner—Abstract paintings whose muted forms interweave the scientific analysis of particle physics with the intuitive mysticism of Taoism; through 4/30. Kelly, 591 Broadway (226-1660).

Renée Levi—A sculpture constructed from industrial foam; through 4/27. Crosby Street Project, 113 Crosby St. (925-8289).

Larry Mantello—Stuffed fabric constructions; through 4/20. Wittels, 580 Broadway (219-2211).

Roger Newton—Photographs printed on plywood panels in a homemade adaptation of the gelatin silver process; through 4/27. Zwirner, 43 Greene St. (966-9074).

Lucas Reiner/Walter Robinson—Paintings/"Spin Paintings" from 1985-86. Through 4/27. Grand Salon, 83 Grand St. (226-1861).

Mia Westerlund Roosen—Recent sculptures; through 4/27. Lennon, Weinberg, 560 Broadway (941-0012).

Erika Rothenberg—An installation titled "Sex Lives of Animals"; through 4/20. P.P.O.W., 532 Broadway (941-8642).

Juliao Sarmento—Thickly impastoed paintings that are drawn on with graphite and thematically based on the complex, erotic, and eventually pornographic letters James Joyce wrote to his wife, Nora Barnacle Joyce, between 1904 and 1910; through 4/21. Kelly, 43 Mercer St. (343-2405).

Peter Schuyff—Paintings of spherical shapes; through 4/20. Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St. (274-9300).

Amy Sillman—Paintings that combine landscape, charts, and images suggestive of Bosch, Masaccio, Surrealism, and Indian art to create freewheeling narratives; through 4/20. Kaplan, 580 Broadway (226-6131).

Rosemarie Trockel—Recent drawings by the German artist known for her knitted objects that comment on the relationship between meaning and gender; through 4/27. Nolan/Eckman, 560 Broadway (925-6190).

Meyer Vaisman—A work titled *Green on the Outside, Red on the Inside* that uses actual portions of the artist's childhood home in Caracas, Venezuela; through 4/20. 303, 89 Greene St. (966-5605).

August Zimmermann—Recent works on paper; through 5/4. Bungert, 225 Lafayette St. (925-0200).

Other

Mark Morrisroe—Polaroids, photogravures, films, videos, music, and prints (film screenings on April 19, 20, and 21 at 7); through 4/28. Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. (727-7366), Wed.–Sun. 11–6.

Blake Rayne—An installation of five oil-on-canvas paintings, a cubic object, and a wall painting, all of which play off the gallery's architecture; through 5/4. Greene Naftali, 526 W. 26th St. (463-7770), Wed.–Sun. 12–6.

Meg Webster—The first solo exhibition of the artist's drawings on paper and steel, whose monochromatic surfaces consist of such organic materials as sugar, salt, egg, coffee, beeswax, and blood; through 4/26. Morris Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. (243-3753), Wed.–Sun. 11–6.

Group Shows

Madison Avenue and Vicinity

Americas Society—680 Park Ave. (249-8950). "The Art of Ivory," features more than 100 ivory sculptures created in India and Ceylon during the Portuguese colonial period, from the collection of the Museu Histórico Nacional in Rio de Janeiro; through 4/28.

Baumgold—128 E. 72nd St. (861-7338). "Comic Inspirations," with works by Agro, Greenblat, Grooms, Guston, Lichtenstein, Pensato, Rand, Warhol, others; through 4/27.

Czech Center—1109 Madison Ave. (288-0830). Recent sculpture by six contemporary Czech glass artists; through 5/17.

Hirschl & Adler—21 E. 70th St. (535-8810). "200 Years of Printmaking in America," with works by Audubon, Bellows, Hassam, Lazzell, Lozowick, Storrs, Whistler, others; through 4/20.

Reinhold Brown—26 E. 78th St. (734-7999). An exhibition celebrating landmark exhibitions of the works of Marcel Duchamp through original works, posters, and documents; through 5/5.

Shepherd—21 E. 84th St. (861-4050). Nineteenth-century European paintings, drawings, and sculpture by Carolus-Duran, Delacroix, Gèrôme, Puvis de Chavannes, Valadon, Vuillard, Vedder, others; through 4/27.

57th Street Area

DC Moore—724 Fifth Ave. (247-2111). Recent pastel drawings of landscapes by Wolf Kahn; paintings by Mary Hambleton, Yvonne Jacquette, and Cynthia Knott; through 4/20.

Equitable—787 Seventh Ave. (554-4818). "View From a Golden Hill: Contemporary Artists and the American Academy in Rome" features the works of Drew Beattie & Daniel Davidson, Kristin Jones/Andrew Ginzel, Ann McCoy, Judith Shea, and Christopher Wool, all of whom are recipients of the Rome Prize Fellowship; through 4/27.

Sheehan—20 W. 57th St. (888-4220). Recent prints by Dunham, Lethbridge, Winters; through 4/27.

Snyder—20 W. 57th St. (262-1160). Works by artists whose abstract paintings and sculptures were exhibited by Baroness Hilla Rebay at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Collection of Non-Objective Painting, among them Rudolf Bauer, Penrod Centurion, Dwinell Grant, Irene Rice Pereira, Hilla Rebay, Rolph Scarlett, John Sennhauser, and Jean Xceron; through 4/27.

SoHo and TriBeCa

Alexander and Bonin—59 Wooster St. (925-2343), Fri. and Sat. 10–6. Works by Bordo, Plimack Mangold, Raetz, Salcedo; through 4/27.

Artists Space—38 Greene St. (226-3970). "Mr. Dead and Mrs. Free: The History of Squat Theatre" features original Squat Theatre stage props, films, and videos from the seventies and eighties; through 5/25.

Boone—417 W. Broadway (431-1818). Large-scale wall reliefs by Leonardo Drew, paintings by Mark Francis, and knitted mylar sculptures by Oliver Herring; through 4/27.

Ingbar—568 Broadway (334-1100). Images of the Empire State Building by 24 artists; through 4/27.

Kent—67 Prince St. (966-4500). "Light Into Darkness," with works by Adams, Brauntuch, Brill, Burden, Kearns, Ladda, Messner, Petlin; through 4/20.

Thread Waxing Space—476 Broadway (966-9520). "The Making of Painted Strokes," a multimedia project by Tiong Ang and Carter Kustera; "Offerings," a group exhibition curated by Samantha Tsao; "Confabulating Chaos: A Chamber of Reverie Featuring the Mnemosis Tapes (I-II)": by Annie Bonney; through 4/27.

Other

Baruch College—135 E. 22nd St. (387-1006), Mon.-Fri. 12–5 (Thurs. 12–7). Works by self-taught African-American artists from the collection of Ronald and June Shelp; through 4/19.

Photograph courtesy of the Whitney Museum of American Art.

New York Kunsthalle—210 E. 5th St. (529-5691). "Peep Show," a series of small installations viewed through an aperture in the building's facade, by Becker, Carroll, Cullinane, Dickson, Lamarre, Leopold, Mosher, others; through 6/30.

Snug Harbor Cultural Center—1000 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island (718-448-2500); Wed.–Sun. 12–5; $2 suggested donation. "Making a Place: Art of the Netherlands"; "Making a Place: Installations by Seven Contemporary Dutch Artists"; "Historic Staten Island: The Dutch Connection"; through 6/16.

White Columns—154 Christopher St. (924-4212), Wed.–Sun. 12–6. "Sugar Mountain," with paintings, photographs, and video by Ackerman, Currin, Doran, Goldin, Hill, Morrisroe, Phillips, others; "White Room Program," with works by Harp, Pines, Vanderlip; through 5/12.

Photography

Richard Artschwager—Photographs taken between 1945 and the present as well as a selection of his paintings, sculptures, and multiples; through 4/27. Saul, 560 Broadway (431-0747).

Ferenc Berko—A survey of the Hungarian-born photographer's works made between 1936 and 1949, from his experimental black-and-white studies of the nude produced between 1938 and 1942, to his pioneering work in color, begun in the late forties; through 5/4. Richardson, 560 Broadway (343-1255).

Paul Caponigro—A survey of previously unpublished photographs printed from a store of negatives spanning 40 years; through 4/27. Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. (888-1122).

Leonard Freed/Alfred Eisenstadt—A retrospective of works by the photojournalist/A selection of works by the late *Life* photographer. Through 4/24. Leica, 670 Broadway (777-3051).

Austin Victor Hansen—The photographer, who was born in the Virgin Islands and died in January at the age of 85, spent most of his career documenting day-to-day occurrences in the Harlem community; the works in this exhibition, covering the forties through the eighties, were selected from Hansen's own archives; through 4/28. Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, 515 Malcolm X Blvd. (491-2200); Mon.–Wed. 12–8, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–5.

Horst—A selection of works by the portrait and fashion photographer; through 4/27. Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (966-6223).

ICP—1130 Fifth Ave. (860-1777); Wed.–Sun. 11–6; $4, $2.50 students and seniors. "Josef Sudek: The Pigment Prints, 1947–1954"; "Highlights From the ICP Permanent Collection"; 4/5–7/7.

ICP Midtown—1133 Sixth Ave. (860-1783), Tues. 11–8, Wed.-Sun. 11–6. "Horst: A Retrospective." A survey of works by the fashion photographer who is also the recipient of the 1996 ICP Master of Photography Award; through 6/2. . . . "Intimate Nature: Ansel Adams and the Close View." Photographs that depict the minute, specific aspects of nature; through 6/2. . . . "She Loves It, She Loves It Not: Women and Technology and Mistaken Identities," multimedia installtions by Christine Tamblyn; through 6/2.

Llsa Kahane—Photographs documenting the early years of Fashion Moda, the alternative arts space that opened in the South Bronx in 1979; through 5/25. Lehman College Art Gallery, Bedford Park Blvd. West and Goulden Ave. (718-960-8731), Tues.–Sat. 10–4.

William Klein—A exhibition of contemporary and vintage prints and the film, *Broadway Light*, that coincides with the recent publication of *William Klein: New York 1954.55*, a re-edition of the 1956 title, *Life is Good and Good for You in New York*; through 5/11. At Greenberg and Gallery 292, 120 Wooster St. (334-0010).

Frank Majore—New color photographs of flowers in full bloom; through 4/27. Borden, 560 Broadway (431-0166).

Schickler—52 E. 76th St. (737-6647). A survey of vintage photographs that were published in the Soviet propaganda publication *USSR in Construction* between 1930 and 1940, as well as corresponding original issues; through 4/27.

Photography

Gaze of the Dead

Death and funerary rites in Latin American countries, and their accepted, even honored presence in Latin American life, are the subject of Bastienne Schmidt's stark, beautifully-composed photographs. At Throckmorton Fine Art, Inc., 153 East 61st Street; through May 18.

Bastienne Schmidt—A photo-essay on the subject of death and funerary rites in Latin American cultures; through 5/18. Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. (223-1059).

Stefan Themerson—Experimental photographs, photograms, and collages made between 1928 and 1937; through 4/27. Ubu, 16 E. 78th St. (794-4444).

Arthur Tress—A survey of photographs taken between 1968 and 1972, including works from the series "Open Space in the Inner City," "Dream Collector," and "Theatre of the Mind"; through 5/11. Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave. (628-5300).

John Wadsworth—Black-and-white photographs of funerary sculpture in cemeteries in the United States and Europe; through 4/27. Moore, 594 Broadway (343-7016).

Lisa Young—Computer-generated images based on sports photographs from various archives; through 4/27. Wessel O'Connor, 60 Thomas St. (406-0040).

Museums

Alternative Museum—"Mei-Ling Hom: Offering." A mixed-media installation that reflects on the ancient Chinese ritual of grave sweeping, which is part of Chinese ancestor worship; through 4/6. . . . "Saiman Li: Photography." Self-portraits inscribed with digitally manipulated text and graphics appropriated from immigration and other identification documents; through 4/6. 594 Broadway (226-2158), Tues.—Sat. 11–6; $3 donation suggested.

American Craft Museum—"Klaus Moje Glass." Fifty mosaic glass works created between 1977 and 1994; through 6/9. . . . "The Art of Peter Voulkos." A survey of the artist's ceramic sculptures and related collages and monotypes produced since 1978; through 6/9. . . . "Form-Light-Glass: Contemporary Glass From the Czech Republic"; through 6/9. 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535); Tues. 10–8, Wed.–Sun. 10–5; $5, $2.50 seniors and students.

American Museum of Natural History—"Amber: Window to the Past." A history of amber in fossil specimens and decorative objects; through 9/2. . . . "Witness: Endangered Species of North America." Photographs of animals and plants in immediate danger of extinction; through 10/6. Central Park West at 79th St. (769-5100); Sun.–Thurs. 10–5:45, Fri. and Sat. 10–8:45; $7 suggested contribution, $5 students and seniors, $4 children.

Asia Society—"Worlds Within Worlds: The Richard Rosenblum Collection of Chinese Scholars's Rocks"; through 8/18. . . . "Points of View: Selections From the Permanent Collection"; through 5/5. 725 Park Ave. (288-6400); Tues.–Sat. 11–6 (Thurs. 6-8 free), Sun. 12-5; $3; $1 seniors and students.

Bronx Museum of the Arts—"Bronx Spaces." Works by 23 Bronx-based artists; through 6/23. . . . "Amidst the Silence: Enrique Martinez Celaya and Alberto Rey': through 6/23. . . . "Women of Hope: African Americans and Latinas Who Made a Difference";

Photograph courtesy of Throckmorton Fine Art.

through 6/23. 1040 Grand Concourse, Bronx (718-681-6000); Wed. 3–9, Thurs. and Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $3, $2 students, $1 seniors.

Brooklyn Museum—"The Art of Thomas Wilmer Dewing: Beauty Reconfigured"; through 7/9. . . ."Converging Cultures: Art & Identity in Spanish America." Paintings, sculpture, costumes, textiles, domestic and religious objects, and manuscripts from the Spanish colonial viceroyalties of New Spain and Peru; through 7/14. . . ."Alone in a Crowd: Prints of the 1930s–1940s by African-American Artists From the Collection of Reba and Dave Williams"; through 4/21. . . . "Early Renaissance Paintings From the Brooklyn Museum." The museum's own collection of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Italian panel paintings; through 8/31. . . . "Alison Saar: The Woods Within." A site-specific sculpture installation; through 9/8. 200 Eastern Pkwy., Brooklyn (718-638-5000); Wed.–Sun. 10-5; $4, $2 students, $1.50 seniors.

Dahesh Museum—"Cupids: Flights of Fancy, Love, and Mischief." Images of Cupid in nineteenth-century paintings, sculpture, drawings, and prints by Friedrich Bouterwerk, Joseph Guichard, Fèlix Lucas, Henry Picou, and others; through 6/8. 601 Fifth Ave. (759-0606); Tues.–Sat. 11–6; free.

Dia Center for the Arts—"Hanne Darboven: Kulturgesschichte 1880–1983"; through 6/29. . . . "Jessica Stockholder: Your Skin in This Weather Bourne Eye-Threads & Swollen Perfume"; through 6/29. . . ."European Couples, and Others: Works by Dan Flavin"; through 6/23 . . . ."Komar and Melamid: The Most Wanted Painting on the Web"; through 6/29. . . ."Gerhard Richter: Atlas"; through 6/29. 548 W. 22nd St. (989-5912); Thurs.–Sun. 12–6; $3 suggested contribution.

El Museo del Barrio—"Leandro Katz: Two Projects/A Decade." Two photographic installation works by the writer, filmmaker, and visual artist; through 5/5. . . . "Portrait: A Site-Specific installation by Carla Preiss"; through 4/7. . . . "Recent Acquisitions: Works From the Permanent Collection"; through 5/6. . . . "Historia de la Isla: Graphic Works by Puerto Rican Artists, 1968–1980"; through 4/7. 1230 Fifth Ave. (831-7272); Wed.–Sun. 11–5, Thurs. 12–7; $4, $2 seniors and students.

Frick Collection—"Greuze, A Portraitist for the 90s." A selection of pastel portraits by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725–1805) that were made in Paris in the 1790s; through 4/21. 1 E. 70th St. (288-0700); Tues.–Sat. 10–6, Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors; children under 10 not admitted.

Guggenheim Museum—"Abstraction in the Twentieth Century: Total Risk, Freedom, Discipline." The history of abstraction, from paintings made as early as 1912 by Mondrian, Kandinsky, and Malevich, to works made by Frank Stella and Richard Long specifically for this exhibition; through 5/12. 1071 Fifth Ave., at 88th St. (423-3500); Sun.–Wed. 10–6, Fri. and Sat. 10–8 (Fri. 6–8, pay what you wish), closed Thurs.; $8, $5 students and seniors.

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum— More than 250 works by the sculptor (1904–1988), displayed in his former studio and garden. 32–37 Vernon Blvd., Long Island City (718-721-1932); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun., 11-6 (on Sat. and Sun., the museum operates a shuttle-bus service from Manhattan departing from 70th St. and Park Ave. beginning at 11:30 a.m. and making hourly trips on the half hour; round-trip fare is $5); $4, $2 seniors and children.

Japan Society—"Rainbows and Shimmering Bridges: Contemporary Japanese Lacquerware"; through 4/7. 333 E. 47th St. (832-1155), Tues.–Sun. 11–5; $3 suggested contribution.

Jewish Museum—"Marc Chagall 1907–1917." An overview of the artist's early career, including paintings, gouaches, and drawings; through 8/4. . . ."Too Jewish? Challenging Traditional Identities"; through 7/14. . . . "Recent Acquisitions 1993 to 1995." 1109 Fifth Ave. (423-3200); Sun., Mon., Wed., Thurs. 11–5:45, Tues. 11–8 (Tues. after 5 free); $7, $5 students and seniors.

Metropolitan Museum of Art—"Splendors of Imperial China: Treasures From the National Palace Museum, Taipei." The full breadth of Chinese art is displayed in this exhibit of 475 objects from the Neolithic period through the 18th century, including paintings, calligraphy, ceramics, and jades; through 5/19. . . . "Fabergé in America." All of the 400 objects in this exhibition were collected by Americans, including 15 of the 44 extant Imperial Easter Eggs commissioned by the last Russian czars; through 4/28. . . ."Modern Glass in The Metropolitan Museum of Art."; 4/8–10/30. . . . "Making Music: Two Centuries of Musical Instrument Making in New York"; 4/9–7/28. . . . "Bare Witness: Clothing and Nudity"; through 8/18. . . ."Art of the Deccani Sultans"; through 8/25. . . ."Klee in Munich." One in a series of continuing installations from the Berggruen Klee Collection, which was a gift to the museum in 1984, this exhibit traces the artist's stylistic development during his most formative period; through 6/30. . . . "Pergamon: The Telephos Frieze From the Great Altar." Forty marble sculptures from the Pergamon Museum in Berlin that once decorated the Great Altar of Pergamon in the citadel of Pergamon in northwest Asia Minor; through 4/14. . . . "Textiles of Late Antiquity"; through 4/30. . . . "Picturing Paradise: Colonial Photography of Samoa, 1875–1925"; through 4/4. . . . "Enamels of Limoges"; through 6/16. . . ."Works Progress Administration Color Prints in the Metropolitan"; through 6/16. 1000 Fifth Ave., at 82nd St. (879-5500); Tues.–Thurs. and Sun. 9:30–5:15, Fri. and Sat. 9:30–9; $7 contribution, $3.50 children and seniors. The Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park (923-3700); Tues.–Sun. 9:30–4:45 (closes at 5:15 between April and September).

Museum for African Art—"Memory: Luba Art and the Making of History." An exhibit of sculpture, memory boards, beaded objects, ornamented royal scepters, and other arts of the Luba of Zaire from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries; through 9/8. 593 Broadway (966-1313); Tues.–Fri. 10:3440–5:30, Sat. and Sun. 12–6; $4, $2 children, seniors, and students.

Museum of American Folk Art—"Discovering Ellis Ruley." Paintings by the self-taught African-American artist (1882–1959) from Norwich, Connecticut; through 4/28. 2 Lincoln Square (595-9533); Tues.–Sun. 11:30–7:30; free.

Museum of Modern Art—"Brancusi: Selected Masterworks from the Musée National d'Art Moderne and the Museum of Modern Art, New York"; through 4/23. . . . "Roy DeCarava." A survey of the photographer's works, from his pictures of everyday life in Harlem, through the civil-rights protests of the early sixties, to his recent lyrical studies of nature; through 5/7. . . . "Projects: Hirsch Perlman"; through 5/21. . . ." Refining the Sports Car: Jaguar's E-Type"; 4/4–8/20. . . . "Come Sunday: Photographs by Thomas Roma"; 4/4–6/18. . . ."From the Collection: Abstraction, Pure and Impure"; through 5/21. . . ."Deformations: Aspects of the Modern Grotesque"; through 5/21. . . . "Sol LeWitt Prints 1970–1995." More than 200 of the artist's prints, ranging from his early, austere screenprints to the baroque, undulating woodcuts of 1995; through 5/7. . . . "Lilly Reich: Designer and Architect." Drawings and documentary photographs of exhibition installations and furniture and product designs by the influential German architect and designer (1885–1947); through 5/7. 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480); Sat.–Tues. 11–6, Thurs. and Fri. noon–8:30, closed Wed.; $8, $5 students and seniors (Thurs. and Fri. 5:30–8:30, pay what you wish).

Museum of the City of New York—"Gaelic Gotham: A History of the Irish in New York"; through 10/27. . . ."The Talk of the Town: Rea Irvin of *The New Yorker*." Original covers, drawings, and cartoons by *The New Yorker*'s first art director, from the museum's own collection; through 5/5. 1220 Fifth Ave., at 103rd St. (534-1672); Wed.–Sat. 10–5, Sun. 1–5; $5, $3 students and seniors.

National Academy of Design—"The Figure in American Sculpture: A Question of Modernity." Organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, this exhibition explores the basic concepts of early-twentieth-century modernism through the works of 80 figurative sculptors, among them Alexander Calder, José de Creeft, Harriet Frishmuth, Malvina Hoffman, Paul Manship, and Isamu Noguchi; through 5/5. . . . "Rodin: Sculpture From the Collection of Iris and B. Gerald Cantor"; through 5/19. . . . "American Masterworks From The National Academy of Design Collection"; through 5/25. 1083 Fifth Ave. (369-4880); Wed.–Sun. 12–5 (Fri. until 8); $5, $3.50 seniors, students, and children under 16.

New Museum of Contemporary Art—"A Labor of Love." Works by more than 40 contemporary artists who use handmade folk- or craft-oriented processes to create their work; through 4/14. 583 Broadway (219-1222); Wed., Thurs., Fri., Sat. 12–8 (6–8 free), Sun. 12–6; $4, $3 artists, students, and seniors.

New York Public Library—"The Global Library http://www.nypl.org." An exhibit that examines the digital revolution within the context of a 5000-year history of communications; through 8/17. . . ."The Hand of the Poet: Original Manuscripts by 100 Masters." This exhibit of original manuscripts from the Berg Collection's holdings includes such treasures as the typescript of T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* with handwritten corrections by Ezra Pound; through 4/27. Fifth Ave. and 42nd St. (869-8089); Mon. 10–6, Tues.–Wed. 11–6, Thurs.–Sat. 10–6; free.

New-York Historical Society—"New York Then and Now: The Upper West Side." Vintage photographs of New York's Upper West Side from the Society's permanent collection; through 5/19. . . ."Wrought in Common Clay: New York Stoneware From the Collection of the New-York Historical Society"; through 4/7. . . . "In Cold Blood: Five Murders That Shocked New York"; through 4/7. 2 W. 77th St. (873-3400); Wed.–Sun. noon–5; $3, $1 seniors and children.

Pierpont Morgan Library—"The Art of the Brontës: Drawings and Manuscripts." Drawings and manuscripts by Charlotte, Anne, Emily, and Branwell Brontë; through 4/14. . . . "A Great Heritage: Renaissance and Baroque Drawings from Chatsworth"; through 4/21. 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008); Tues.–Fri. 10:30–5, Sat. 10:30–6, Sun. noon–6; $5 suggested donation, $3 students and seniors.

South Street Seaport Museum—"Sacred Waters." More than 40 works by contemporary Outsider artists, among them Thorton Dial, Sr., Sam Doyle, Sister Gertrude Morgan, Elijah Pierce, and Alfred Wallis; through 5/1. 207 Front St. (748-8600); Wed.–Mon. 10–5 (closed Tues.); $6, $5 seniors, $4 students, $3 children.

Studio Museum in Harlem—"Explorations in the City of Light: African-American Artists in Paris, 1945–1965"; through 6/2. . . ."The Listening Sky: An Inaugural Exhibition of the Studio Museum in Harlem Sculpture Garden"; through 8/25. 144 W. 125th St. (864-4500); Wed.–Fri. 10–5, Sat. and Sun. 1–6; $5, $3 students and seniors.

Whitney Museum of American Art—"Kienholz: A Retrospective." The first museum retrospective of the artist's own work and his twenty years of collaborations with his wife and partner, Nancy Reddin Kienholz, including more than 100 pieces ranging from intimate objects to house-scale environments; through 6/2. . . . "Willem de Kooning's Door Cycle." Paintings on doors that were created in the mid-sixties and explore the motif of a single, standing woman; through 5/26.. 945 Madison Ave., at 75th St. (570-3676); Wed., Fri., Sat., Sun. 11–6, Thurs. 1–8; $8, $6 students and seniors (free Thurs. 6–8).

Whitney Museum of American Art at Philip Morris—"Matthew McCaslin: Harnessing Nature"; through 3/29. Park Ave. at 42nd St. (878-2550); Mon.–Fri. 11–6 (Thurs. to 7:30); free.

Auctions

Christie's—502 Park Ave. (546-1000). Next auction on 4/12.

Christie's East—219 E. 67th St. (546-1000). Next aucion on 4/15.

Doyle—175 E. 87th St. (427-2730). 4/3 at 10: "English & Continental Furniture, Decorations, and Paintings." On view from 3/30.

Sotheby's—York Ave. at 72nd St. (606-7000). 4/3 at 10:15: "Southeast Asian Paintings." On view from 3/29.

theater

Savion Glover...Prom Zombies...Bye, George

Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Apple Doesn't Fall—Television writer Trish Vradenburg (*Designing Women, Kate and Allie*) makes her Broadway debut with a comedy about her experiences dealing with her mother's serious—but not too somber, apparently—illness. With Margaret Whitton and Florence Stanley; directed by Leonard Nimoy (yes, *that* Leonard Nimoy). $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/14 opening. *Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Big—A musical adaptation by John Weidman, Richard Maltby Jr., and David Shire of the 1988 film that starred Tom Hanks as a 12-year-old kid who makes a wish for an adult body and, to his surprise, gets it. With Daniel Jenkins, Crista Moore, and Jon Cypher; directed by Mike Ockrent, with choreography by Susan Stroman. $42.50–$70. Through 4/27: Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Beginning 4/30: Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Beginning performances 4/8 for a 4/28 opening. *Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Bring in 'da Noise, Bring In 'da Funk—$20–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Beginning previews 4/9 for a 4/25 opening. *Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200).*

A Delicate Balance—The writer who infused continental absurdism with a distinctively American accent ends his far-too-long absence from Broadway with this Lincoln Center Theater revival of his 1966 Pulitzer Prize-winning drama about a family torn between love, fear, and madness. $25–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/21 opening. *Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum —A new revival of the 1962 musical, featuring Nathan Lane as that sly guy Pseudolus. $25–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. In previews for a 4/18 opening. *St. James Theatre, 246 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Inherit the Wind—Since it opened on Broadway in 1955, there's been literally no time when Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee's fictionalized version of the Scopes "Monkey" trial—the 1925 court case pitting biblical against scientific accounts of creation—hasn't been playing *somewhere*. Ironically, its first Broadway revival ever comes at a time when the debate over creationism, originally used by the play's authors as a mere cover for registering outrage against the political depredations of Senator Joseph McCarthy, has (re)emerged as a compelling public issue in its own right. Tony Randall's National Actors Theatre version stars George C. Scott and Charles Durning in the roles based on Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan; theater veterans may recall that Randall himself played E. K. Hornbeck, a character based on H. L. Mencken, in the original production. $20–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opening 4/4; through 4/14. *Royale, 242 W. 45th St. (239-6280).*

Opening Poll Axed

The human cost of politics is the focus of Mark R. Shapiro's The Shattering, a Ross Perot–inspired drama about the devastation wrought by a third-party candidate's 1992 campaign for the presidency upon a middle-class family of supporters. Opening Tuesday at the Players Theater.

The King and I—Along with Lincoln Center's recent *Carousel* and the current Broadway production of *State Fair,* the Rodgers-and-Hammerstein renaissance continues apace with their famous musical adaptation of the memoir *Anna and the King of Siam*, featuring contemporary heartthrob Lou Diamond Phillips (un-bald) in the role created by Yul Brynner. $25–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. In previews for a 4/11 opening. *Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. (307-4100).*

Rent—Hours after his newest production's first dress rehearsal, the talented young writer and composer Jonathan Larson died—suddenly, unexpectedly, and sadly—of a heart attack. The show—a reimagining of Puccini's *La Bohème* as it might be lived by a gaggle of contemporary young and hip types in the East Village—in the best theatrical tradition, goes on, having become in the process the most talked-about theatrical production of the current season. Following the end of its downtown run at the New York Theatre Workshop, it is currently making the move from there to Broadway's *Nederlander Theater, 208 W. 41st St. (307-4100)*; previews will begin there on 4/16 for a 4/29 (re)opening.

Now Playing

Beauty and the Beast—A musical based on a movie based on a fairy tale. Setting box-office and, presumably, merchandising records even as we speak. Christianne Tisdale plays the girl; Jeff McCarthy plays the (hairy) boy. With Tony-award-winning costume design by Ann Hould-Ward. Lyrics by Tim Rice and the late Howard Ashman; score by Alan Menken. $22.50–$67.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 1 and 6:30. Opened: 4/18/94. *Palace Theatre, 1564 Broadway, at 47th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Ground Rules:

Except where noted, Broadway shows begin at 8 and are dark Monday. Wallet-watchers should keep in mind the TKTS booths, where half-price tickets are available (for that day's performance only) to many Broadway and Off Broadway shows. TKTS booths are at Broadway and 47th St. and 2 World Trade Center, mezzanine level; call 212-768-1818 for more info. Involved in a production and want to submit details for a possible listing? Call 212-880-0740.

Cats—Now and for the foreseeable future. By Andrew Lloyd Webber, of course, with an assist from T. S. Eliot. $37.50–$65. Dark Thurs. Opened: 10/7/82. *Winter Garden Theater, 1634 Broadway, at 50th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Defending the Caveman—Rob Becker's one-man show, which posits a genetically inherited difference from prehistoric days to explain why men ("hunters") and women ("gatherers") get irritated with each other in Bloomingdale's. $47.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2 and 5. *Helen Hayes Theatre, 240 W. 44th St. (228-3626, or just dial CAVE-MAN). 1 hr. 40 mins.*

Grease!—A crowd-pleasing, neon-heavy rock-and-roll musical about a group of high-school seniors in 1959. Book, music, and lyrics by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey; directed and choreographed by Jeff Calhoun. With Jeff Trachta ("The Bold and the Beautiful") as bad boy Danny Zuko, Joe Piscopo ("Saturday Night Live") as the deejay, and Al Jarreau (no identification necessary) as Teen Angel. $30–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 5/11/94. *Eugene O'Neill Theatre, 230 W. 49th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—Armed only with charming dishonesty, aggressive young striver J. Pierrepont Finch (the role created by Robert Morse) rises swiftly to the top of the corporate world in a new Broadway revival of the 1961 musical. Has much become dated in Shepherd Mead's classic farce about raging ambition? Well, the Man in the Gray Flannel Suit wears Armani these days, but the songs and lighthearted satire are as sharp as ever. Matthew Broderick has recently returned to the starring part in which he opened the production last spring, this time opposite his real-life girlfriend Sarah Jessica Parker as the girls-just-wanna-get-married secretary Rosemary. $25–$67.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Richard Rodgers Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. (307-4100). 2 hrs. 40 mins.*

Les Misérables—This pop-opera adaptation of the sprawling Victor Hugo novel, currently in its tenth year on Broadway, recently became the fourth-longest-running show in Broadway history. With a book by Alain Boublil and Claude-Michel Schonberg; music by the latter; lyrics by Herbert Kretzmer. $15–$70. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Opened: 3/12/87. *Imperial Theater, 249 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 3 hrs. 15 mins.*

Love Thy Neighbor—Jackie Mason, back on Broadway with a new one-man show of stand-up comedy. $37.50–$49.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Booth, 222 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Master Class—In the early seventies, opera star Maria Callas took her diva persona from stage to classroom with a celebrated series of tutorials for young hopefuls. Slightly fictionalized, they're the subject of Terrence McNally's newest play, starring Zoe Caldwell as the great *monstre sacrée* herself. $32.50–$50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. *Golden Theatre, 252 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

A Midsummer Night's Dream—How like a winter hath their absence been! England's Royal Shakespeare Company returns to New York for the first time in eight years with its current and enthusiastically received production of the master's most sweetly lyric play. With Desmond Barrit, Lindsay Duncan, and Alex Jennings; directed by Adrian Noble. $30–$65. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 5/26. *Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. (307-4100).*

Miss Saigon—A reworking of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* set in Vietnam during the fall of Saigon. Score by Claude-Michel Schonberg; lyrics by Alain Boublil and Richard Maltby Jr.; directed by Nicholas Hytner. $15–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2; dark Sun. Opened: 4/11/91. *Broadway Theater, 1681 Broadway, at 53rd St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Molly Sweeney—Brian Friel's story of a woman blind from birth who, owing to the efforts of an ambitious ophthalmologist (Brian Murray) and a Micawberish husband (Alfred Molina), regains partial vision after 40 years but—feeling that an essential dimension of her personality has been lost in the process—ultimately chooses to revert to sightlessness. "You will be glad to see a play as fine as Brian Friel's *Molly Sweeney;* you'll be thrilled to catch three performers making drama the way a marvelous chamber group plays, say, the Fauré trio; and you'll be telling your grandchildren that you saw, at the apex of this triangle, Catherine Byrne as Molly. Do not, I implore you, miss this play, miss this cast, miss Ms. Byrne's self-tamed tiger burning bright." (Simon; 1/22/95.) $45. Tues.–Sat. at 7:30, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2:30. *Laura Pels Theater at the Roundabout, 1530 Broadway (869-8400).*

Moon Over Buffalo—In Ken (*Lend Me a Tenor*) Ludwig's new farce, Carol Burnett and Phillip Bosco play a husband-and-wife team of theatrical hams in no danger of being mistaken for Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne. (Lynn Redgrave and Robert Goulet are currently filling in for them for a seven-week period; Ms. Burnett and Mr. Bosco will be back on 4/17.) $40–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Martin Beck Theatre, 302 W. 45th St. (239-6200). 1 hr. 50 mins.*

The Night of the Iguana—Tennessee Williams's plays were written directly from a volatile mixture of emotion and nerve, a manner of working that faltered with the declining energies of his later years. When he was on his game, though, the results were incomparable. Cherry Jones (*The Heiress*) and William Petersen star in this production of Williams's final (1961) commercial and critical success, in which a lusty widow and a defrocked priest seek for some sort of shared solution to the agony of their common loneliness. $55. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed., Sat., and Sun. at 2. *Roundabout Stage Right, 1530 Broadway (869-8400).*

The Phantom of the Opera—In its ninth year on Broadway, Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster continues to pack them in, passing the 3,200-performance mark recently and edging into sixth place among the longest-running musicals. And strangely—or wisely, depending on your point of view—it's no nearer to becoming a movie than on the day it opened. $15–$67.50. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 1/26/88. *Majestic Theater, 247 W. 44th St. (239-6200). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Opening

Atomic, Baby!

When the bomb's hanging over your high-school head, what to do but doo-wop? Zombie Prom, a musical parody of fifties teen movies, opens April 9 at the Variety Arts.

Photograph by Jerry Goodstein.

Seven Guitars—"Things as they are/ Are changed upon the blue guitar," wrote Wallace Stevens. No one knows that better than playwright August Wilson, whose flashback-laden story of a blues guitarist's premature death is the latest installment in his exploration of the black experience in America. $15–$60. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 7 through 4/21; thereafter, Sun. performances at 3. *Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. (239-6200).*

Show Boat—Because it covers three generations of show folk, because its action spans four decades, because it shuttles between steamy Natchez and boreal Chicago, and because it touches on such varied subjects as race relations and the dispersal of families, *Show Boat* is usually described as having epic sweep. In a production such as this, certainly. There are problems with the plotting, but director Harold Prince's staging moves so swiftly and involvedly that there is no time for questions. He is seconded by choreographer Susan Stroman, who with this effort surges to the forefront of Broadway dance creators. This *Show Boat* is a dreamboat. (Simon; 10/17/94) $30–$75. Opened: 10/2/94. *Gershwin Theater, 222 W. 51st St. (307-4100). 3 hrs.*

Smokey Joe's Cafe: The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—They say the neon lights are bright on Broadway, and when this show—drawn from the score Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller composed to accompany the American baby-boomer childhood experience—breezes into New York City, people gonna scrape and bow. You don't like crazy music? (We keep forgettin'.) Don't feel that way; baby, that is rock and roll. A tip, tip, tip, young blood: Buy yourself a ticket, sit down in the very first row. Have a drink and dig the band. Can't you hear the flügelhorn? Can't you hear the bell? Come to them sickly, they'll make you well. We don't know why our heart flips (and, baby, we don't care); we only know it does. Heartbreakin' nights, only in America. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. $60–$70. At the *Virginia Theatre, 245 W. 52nd St. (239-6200)?* Uh-huh. *2 hrs. 10 mins.*

State Fair—Had enough of the snow, New Yorkers? Take heart: In this new (and first-time-ever) stage adaptation of Richard Rodgers and Oscar Hammerstein II's 1945 musical film, about corn-fed Midwesterners experiencing pretty much the complete range of human emotions (boy meets girl, farmer meets pig, etc.) at the Iowa state fair, it might as well be spring. $55–$75. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. (239-6200).*

Sunset Boulevard—"Patti LuPone's Norma Desmond was a tough gutter sparrow; Glenn Close's—close, but no cigar—a cross between the cigar-store Indian and a cathedral gargoyle. Now there is Betty Buckley, whose presence appears to have rewritten, recast, and redirected the entire show. With her trueness heightening everyone else's acting while giving us a Norma who will remain the norm, 10086 Sunset Boulevard becomes as important a number in musical annals as 1066 in English history—that of the Norma(n) Conquest." (Simon; 8/7/95.) $25–$70. Mon.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 11/17/94. *Minskoff Theatre, 200 W. 45th St. (307-4007). 2 hrs. 30 mins.*

Victor/Victoria—Reprising her title role in husband Blake Edwards's 1982 film, Julie Andrews—returning to the Broadway stage for the first time since the early sixties and *Camelot*—struts her stuff in (the late) Henry Mancini and Leslie Bricusse's musical adaptation of Mr. Edwards's comedy of sexual manners. "One way or another, *Victor/Victoria* will make history. Like a karaoke record, it's got everything minus one: a true star, a solid cast and ensemble, savvy staging and choreography, lush scenery and costumes and lighting, a funny (or at least doggedly farcical) book—everything but one really good song. This will be the test: Can a Broadway musical make it without a score? Julie Andrews has a look, voice, and personality that live in perfect harmony with one another, whether she is singing, dancing, acting, or just being. But there is—or rather, isn't—the unrelievedly second-rate music of the late Henry Mancini, augmented by three songs from Frank Wildhorn, which blend in seamlessly, alas. Still, *Victor/Victoria* may be the best unmusical musical you are ever going to see." (Simon; 11/6/95.) With Tony Roberts, Michael Nouri, and Rachel York; written and directed by Mr. Edwards. $20–$75. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Marquis, 1535 Broadway (382-0100). 2 hrs. 45 mins.*

Off Broadway

Previews and Openings

The Boar's Carcass—Things get fast and things get furious when a young man places a personal ad for sexual, er, equipment. Stephanie Dickinson's comedy-thriller is directed by David Calvitto. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Beginning previews 4/9 for a 4/14 opening. Through 5/5. *Theatre at St. Peter's, 619 Lexington Ave. (935-5820).*

Cowgirls—What happens when a classical-music trio gets booked by mistake into a country-music palace and races frantically to accommodate its longhair style to a room where crewcuts predominate? About what you *A Night at the Opera* fans would imagine, probably. Mary Murfitt and Betsy Howie's new musical comedy of errors is directed by Eleanor Reissa. $29.50–$35 in previews, $29.50–$45 thereafter. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7, Sat. at 10, Sun. at 3. Opening 4/1. *Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta La. (420-8000).*

The Shattering—$25 during previews, $40 thereafter. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 3, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opening 4/1. *Players Theatre, 115 MacDougall St. (239-6200).*

Sunset Salome —In a theatrical variation on the old literary game of guessing what happened (happens?) to characters in novels after the book ends, this new musical by Peter Wing Healey and Max Kinberg checks in on *Sunset Boulevard's* Norma Desmond—ready for her closeup and then some—as she stages a private version of *Salome* with her fellow inmates at a California hospital for the criminally insane. $15 in previews, $20 after opening. 4/5 at 7, 4/6 at 2, 4/7 at 3:30; thereafter, Fri. and Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3:30. Beginning previews 4/5 for a 4/7 opening. *HERE Performance Space, 145 Sixth Ave. (647-0202).*

Zombie Prom—$35–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opening 4/9. *Variety Arts Theatre, 110 Third Ave. (239-6200).*

Now Playing

After-Play—After a successful limited run at the Manhattan Theatre Club early last year, the actress Anne Meara's debut play about four old friends sharing a New York evening of dinner, theater, and memories is currently a few blocks west. Following several months of playing one of the two female roles, Ms. Meara—what's life without variety?—has decided to step into the other one. Her replacement in the vacated part is MGM grandee Jane Powell (*Royal Wedding*, *Seven Brides for Seven Brothers*). Also with Rita Moreno and Jerry Stiller. $40. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. (239-6200).*

Bein' With Behan—Michael L. Kavanagh's one-man recreation of the life of Brendan Behan. $20. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. (279-4200).*

Below the Belt—In Richard Dresser's new, blackish comedy, Judd Hirsch (*Taxi*, *Conversations with My Father*) and Robert Sean Leonard crunch numbers, climb the business ladder, and watch their backs (and each other) in a remote industrial outpost. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. *John Houseman Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (239-6200).*

Blue Man Group: Tubes—Smart silliness, with toilet paper, neon-colored paint, cereal, etc. Kids love it, and adults can pretend the show's an ironic commentary on performance art. $35–$45. Tues., Wed., Thurs. at 8, Fri, and Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 4 and 7. Opened: 11/17/91. *Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. (254-4370).*

Bomber Jackets—The leader of a gay-bashing gang finds himself sexually attracted to a young transvestite in Rob Santana's new drama. $15; groups of twenty or more, $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 6:30. Through 4/21. *Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. (354-1293).*

Chez GARBO—In Michelangelo Alasa's environmental musical, the audience strolls through a conceptual artist's gallery recreation of Greta Garbo's East Side apartment—and, as well, through the last 50 years of the famous recluse's life. $20. Thurs.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7, Sun. at 3. *DUO Theatre, 62 E. 4th St. (598-4320).*

A Fair Country—The enduring subject of the young dramatist Jon Robin Baitz is a currently unfashionable one: the demands of what used to be called Conscience. His latest script, based on a childhood experience, examines the private and public agonies of a family of American diplomats assigned to a nowhere posting in South Africa, including a man whose status as husband and father is corroded by a series of vicious, petty compromises as his Cassandra-like wife quietly (and sometimes not so quietly) goes mad. $37.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 6/30. *Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater at Lincoln Center, 150 W. 65th St. (239-6200).*

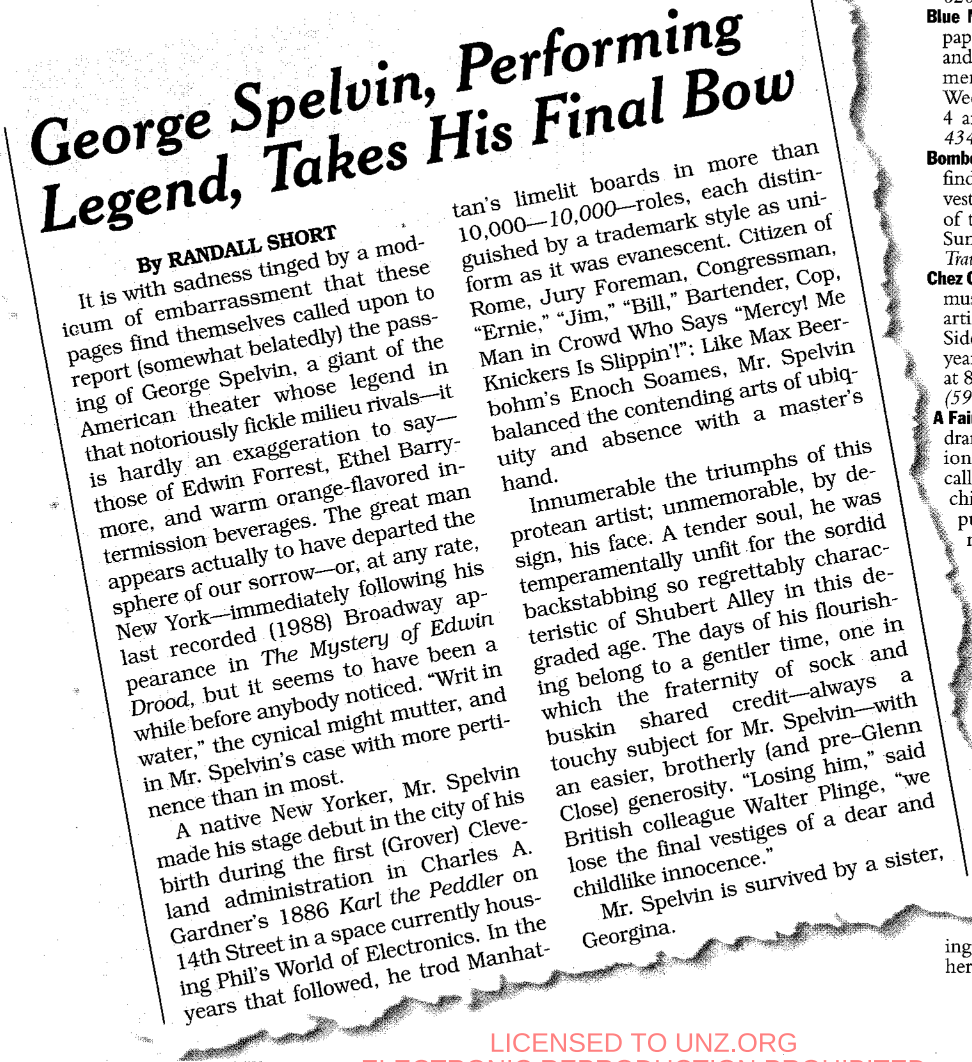
The Fantasticks—The musical perennial that, happily, refuses to go away. $35. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 3 and 7, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Opened: 5/3/60. *Sullivan St. Theater, 181 Sullivan St. (674-3838).*

The Food Chain—The playwright Nicky Silver (*Pterodactyls*, *Raised in Captivity*) is a young master of the theater's most challenging trick, often attempted and rarely successful: making audiences gasp in (moral) horror while simultaneously shrieking with laughter. His latest black farce, arriving here after a successful run in Washington last sum-

Tribute

Ave, Vale

"April," wrote T. S. Eliot, "is the cruelest month." Its first day this year brings sad news indeed, attributable directly to the pesky insistence of modern actors upon being billed under their own names. The attached obituary—not included in every edition of the Newspaper of Record—we here reprint as a public service.



George Spelvin, Performing Legend, Takes His Final Bow

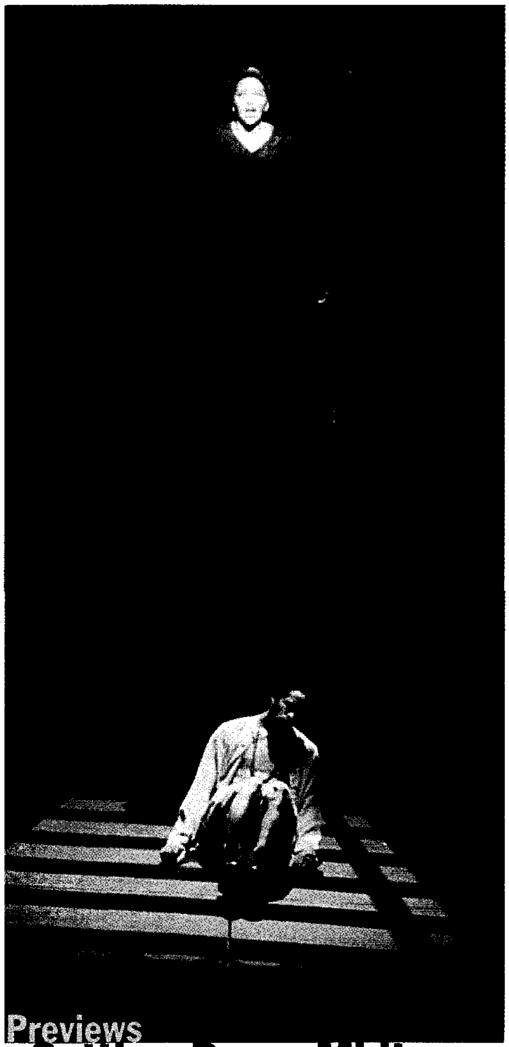
By RANDALL SHORT

It is with sadness tinged by a modicum of embarrassment that these pages find themselves called upon to report (somewhat belatedly) the passing of George Spelvin, a giant of the American theater whose legend in that notoriously fickle milieu rivals—it is hardly an exaggeration to say—those of Edwin Forrest, Ethel Barrymore, and warm orange-flavored intermission beverages. The great man appears actually to have departed the sphere of our sorrow—or, at any rate, New York—immediately following his last recorded (1988) Broadway appearance in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, but it seems to have been a while before anybody noticed. "Writ in water," the cynical might mutter, and in Mr. Spelvin's case with more pertinence than in most.

A native New Yorker, Mr. Spelvin made his stage debut in the city of his birth during the first (Grover) Cleveland administration in Charles A. Gardner's 1886 *Karl the Peddler* on 14th Street in a space currently housing Phil's World of Electronics. In the years that followed, he trod Manhattan's limelit boards in more than 10,000—10,000—roles, each distinguished by a trademark style as uniform as it was evanescent. Citizen of Rome, Jury Foreman, Congressman, "Ernie," "Jim," "Bill," Bartender, Cop, Man in Crowd Who Says "Mercy! Me Knickers Is Slippin'!": Like Max Beerbohm's Enoch Soames, Mr. Spelvin balanced the contending arts of ubiquity and absence with a master's hand.

Innumerable the triumphs of this protean artist; unmemorable, by design, his face. A tender soul, he was temperamentally unfit for the sordid backstabbing so regrettably characteristic of Shubert Alley in this degraded age. The days of his flourishing belong to a gentler time, one in which the fraternity of sock and buskin shared credit—always a touchy subject for Mr. Spelvin—with an easier, brotherly (and pre–Glenn Close) generosity. "Losing him," said British colleague Walter Plinge, "we lose the final vestiges of a dear and childlike innocence."

Mr. Spelvin is survived by a sister, Georgina.



Previews

Getting Down Midtown

Miss it at the Public a few months ago? Bring in 'da Noise, Bring in 'da Funk, George C. Wolfe and Savion Glover's meditation on the pre-Hollywood ethnic roots of tap dancing, moves to Broadway's Ambassador Theatre on April 9.

mer, concerns the import of obesity upon sex (straight, gay, and varied) and its attendant emotions. And a Jewish mother is thrown in—just, no doubt, to make sure the whole thing remains a comedy. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. (307-4100).*

Forbidden Hollywood—Gerard Alessandrini, creator of the long-running, often updated *Forbidden Broadway,* has redirected his irreverently satirical gaze—best characterized as a wise-ass smirk with a leavening dollop of genuine affection—from stage to silver screen. $35–$40. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10, Sun. at 3 and 7:30. Through 5/19. *The Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. (799-4599).*

Grandma Sylvia's Funeral—An audience-participation comedy akin to *Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding,* written by Glenn Wein and Amy Lord Blumsack. When Grandma Sylvia dies, a power struggle ensues among family members. $35–$55, which includes a mitzvah meal. Opened: 10/9/94. Wed. at 3, Wed.–Thurs. at 7:30, Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Sun. at 1 and 5. *Soho Playhouse (formerly Playhouse on Vandam), 15 Vandam St. (691-1555).*

Hamletmachine—Five hundred years of Western Civilization, as dissected by the German playwright Heiner Müller. $25. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2. Through 4/14. *Castillo Cultural Center, 500 Greenwich St. (941-5800).*

I Do! I Do!—After *The Fantasticks,* Tom Jones and Harvey Schmidt will be best remembered in theatrical history for this musical adaptation of Jan de Hartog's play *The Fourposter,* which chronicles with rueful, knowing cleverness the ups and downs in the 50-year love affair of—surprise!—a married couple. With Karen Ziemba (*Crazy for You*) and David Garrison. $45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed. and Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Lambs Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

Life Is a Dream—The drama by Calderón. $21–$26. Tues., Thurs., and Fri. at 8, Sat. at 5 and 9, Wed. and Sun. at 2. Through 5/5. *Pearl Theatre, 80 St. Marks Place (598-9802).*

Mrs. Klein—The latest project of that fine actress and New York stage veteran Uta Hagen is Nicholas Wright's new play about the mysterious 1934 death of the son of early Freud disciple and psychotherapist Melanie Klein. With Amy Wright and Laila Robins; directed by William Carden. $40–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Wed at 2:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 6/2. *Lucille Lortel Theatre, 121 Christopher St. (239-6200).*

Nixon's Nixon—After a successful run at MCC Theater last fall, Russell Lees's two-character play about a certain former ketchup-on-cottage-cheese-eating U.S. president and his national-security adviser has transferred uptown. $45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Wed. at 2, Sun. at 3. *Westside Theater, 407 W. 43rd St. (315-2244).*

Nude Nude Totally Nude / A Line Around the Block—Two alternating one-woman shows, respectively written/performed by the brilliant comedienne Andrea Martin (*SCTV, My Favorite Year*) and Marga Gomez. Each show $22.50; call for detailed schedule. *Public Theater, 425 Lafayette St. (260-2400).*

Overtime—In A. R. Gurney's comic sequel to *The Merchant of Venice,* the author of *Love Letters* and *The Dining Room* leaves his usual subject of dysfunctional northeastern Wasp gentility for something new: a comic fantasia that not only looks in on Shakespeare's Venetians just after the trial scene but transmutes them into a gumbo of contemporary, issue-driven ethnic characters including Jews, blacks, Latinos, and Irish-Americans. $30. Tues.–Sun at 7:30, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Manhattan Theatre Club at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. (581-1212).*

Perfect Crime—Warren Manzi's long-running thriller about a wealthy psychiatrist accused of murdering her husband, and the small-town detective who tries to prove she committed the "perfect crime." $35. Mon. and Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3 and 7, Wed. and Sat. at 2. Opened: 4/5/87. *Duffy Theatre, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. (695-3401).*

Picasso at the Lapin Agile—Steve Martin's playwriting debut is about modern art, the Theory of Relativity, sleeping with girls, the creative process, *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon,* sleeping with girls, the romance of transcendental mathematics, sleeping with gi—well, many interesting beverages, and Elvis. $40–$45. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 6 and 9, Sun. at 3 and 7. *Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. (239-6200).*

Sabina—Based on Aldo Carotenuto's book *A Secret Symmetry,* Willy Holtzman's new drama explores the breach engendered between psychoanalytic pioneers Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung by Sabina Spielrein, Jung's first analysand and later his lover. $33 Tues.–Thurs., $35 Fri–Sun. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2, Sun. at 3. Through 4/7. *Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. (333-4052).*

Schoolhouse Rock Live!—A musical adaptation of the award-winning ABC–TV children's series. $20–$25. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200).*

The Size of the World—A new family comedy by Charles Evered. $35–$45. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 2:30, Sun. at 3. *Circle Repertory Theater Downtown, 159 Bleecker St. (239-6200).*

Stomp—As the title implies, a loud, aggressive, and energetic show in which a troupe of performers dance, clap, and generally bang on everything in sight. Featuring buckets, brooms, trash-can lids, and, yes, the kitchen sink. More engaging than you might expect. $29–$39.50. Tues.–Fri. at 8, Sat. at 7 and 10:30, Sun. at 3 and 7. Opened: 2/27/94. *Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., bet. 7th and 8th Sts. (307-4100).*

Take It Easy—A new musical that pays affectionate *hommage* to Hollywood's version of forties wartime romance. $27.50. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 2, Sun. at 7. Through 6/2. *Judith Anderson Theatre, 422 W. 42nd St. (307-4100).*

Tartuffe—Molière's famous comedy, in Richard Wilbur's equally famous translation. $24; $19 seniors, $12 students. Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. Through 5/11. *Jean Cocteau Repertory, 330 Bowery at Bond St. (677-0060).*

Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding—A wedding at *St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St.,* then a reception at *147 Waverly Pl.,* with Italian buffet, champagne, and wedding cake. Wonderfully tacky—and it's lasted longer than a lot of real marriages. $60–$75. Tues.–Sun. at 7, Sat. and Sun. at 2. Opened: 2/6/88 (279-4200).

The Tragic and Horrible Life of the Singing Nun—Some show titles hardly *need* a plot summary, do they? Suffice it to say, then, that Blair Fell's play with music takes a distinctly unsentimental approach to the real-life story of the Belgian *soeur* who captivated American audiences in the sixties as one of Ed Sullivan's favorite guests, only—good heavens—to commit suicide with her lesbian lover twenty years later. $20/TDF. Wed.–Fri. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 7, Sat. at 10. *Grove Street Playhouse, 39 Grove St. (279-4200).*

Unto the Innocent—An absurdist comedy about Greenwich Village radicals, 1917 vintage. $25–$27.50. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3, Sun. at 7. Through 4/14. *Chernuchin Theatre, American Theatre of Actors, 314 W. 54th St. (307-7171).*

Working Title—The story of an unsuccessful screenwriter who, spending a weekend in the Hamptons awaiting a response to the first draft of his hoped-for breakthrough script on the Holocaust, uses the time to reflect on issues of marriage, career, and Jewishness. $30. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 2 and 7; no show 4/3, 4. *American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. (633-9797).*

Off-Off Broadway

Cardenio—$12. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sun. at 3. *Linhart Theatre, 440 Lafayette St. (673-5375).*

Catfish, Guns and Corndogs—$8, plus two-drink minimum. Mon. at 8. *Duplex, 61 Christopher St. (255-5438).*

Freestyle Repertory Theatre—A rotating bill of four improvisational-comedy shows; call for detailed schedule. $15 Thurs.–Sun.; free Mondays. Mon., Thurs.–Sat. at 8, Sat. at 10:30, Sun. at 3. Through 4/21. *John Houseman Studio Theatre, 450 W. 42nd St. (642-8202).*

A Hatful of Rain—$12. Tues.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. Through 4/7. *Samuel Beckett Theatre, 410 W. 42nd St. (662-2682).*

How He Lied To Her Husband/Village Wooing—Two one-acts by George Bernard Shaw, in a production by the National Asian-American Theatre Company. $12. Wed.–Sat. at 8, Sat. and Sun. at 3. *Vineyard 26th St. Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. (505-3003).*

The Odd Couple/The Mousetrap—"Couple," Fri. at 8; "Mousetrap," Sat. at 8. $15, plus two-drink minimum. Through 5/25. *Trocadero, 368 Bleecker St. (330-7607).*

Split Ends/...And She Cooks Too!/The Housekeeper—A mixed bill of three separate shows offering cabaret, murder mystery, and lighthearted comedy. $15 (groups over 20: $12), plus a two-drink minimum; all three shows, $30. Call for detailed schedule. *Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. (838-8528).*

The Corner Bar's My Lover Since You Ran Out on Me—Tues.–Sat. at 8. *HERE, 145 Sixth Ave. (647-0202).*

Theatre of Dreams—$15. Fri.–Sat. at 8. *Jan Hus Playhouse, 351 E. 74th St. (1-800-373-2631).*

Valhalla—$12/TDF. Thurs.–Sun. at 8. *Theater for the New City, 155 First Ave. (254-1109).*

Photograh by Michal Daniel.

nightlife

Bottlerockets...Barbara Cook...Seder Hip

Concerts

Iggy Pop—Neither the years nor the broken glass he's rolled around on have mellowed Mr. Pop, or in fact made him grow up in any appreciable way at all. Luckily, it looks like he'll be able to wear skinny, oily adolescence well even into his fifties. Pop's new record, *Naughty Little Doggy,* shows the same sort of cockeyed existentialism he revealed with punk cofounders the Stooges; the cosmic meditation on a dead bird on the sidewalk clearly comes from the same trailer-park Camus that bemoaned "another year with nothing to do" in "1969." Happily, so does the wide-eyed priapisms that fill much of *Naughty,* including the question—posed to the young women on 14th Street—"Can your pussy walk?" Somehow, Pop isn't offensive when he asks it. He plays with Psychotica and Junior Kimbrough. 4/8 at 7:30 P.M. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $20.*

Foo Fighters—That there are second acts in American rock needs no more proof than Dave Grohl, ex–Nirvana drummer now reborn as singer, guitarist, and songwriter of the mighty Foo Fighters. They play with a similarly trend-defying group, That Dog, an L.A. band whose double-girl harmonies and violinist—both of which they've lent to the Rentals—add an engaging twist to their savvy distorto-melodies and oblique choruses. That the band also includes two daughters of bassist and free-jazz pioneer Charlie Haden somehow makes a lot of sense. 4/6 at 7:30 P.M. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. Sold out.*

R. Kelly—While Oasis may have surprised rock scribes by topping the charts with "Wonderwall"—nominally a love song to a George Harrison record—this clean-headed R&B Lothario couldn't have been too shocked. Singing "you remind me of my Jeep," neo-soulman R. Kelly had already paid his intended the highest compliment a thing-loving dude could muster. He struts his bump-and-grind with rap *Übermensch* turned love daddy L. L. Cool J, as well as Xscape and Solo. 4/10 at 7:30 P.M. *Nassau Coliseum in Uniondale, N.J. (307-7171). $25–$35.* 4/12 at 7:30 P.M. *Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, N.J. (307-7171). $27.50–$37.50.*

Jackson Browne—4/2–4/3 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (307-7171). $35–$50.*

Joe Satriani—Though he doesn't *always* play like he's getting paid by the note, this fleet-fingered guitar hero remains most beloved by fans of burning fretwork and home instructional videos. He plays with Rollover. 4/11 at 8 p.m. *Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171). $25.*

Ruben Blades—The Latin music and movie star holds forth on 4/6 at 8 P.M. *Beacon Theatre, 2124 Broadway, at 74th St. (307-7171). $35–$50.*

Deep Listening Band—Pauline Oliveros, Stuart Dempster, and David Gemper create a deep listening environment by electronically receiving music from Chicago and Seattle. 4/6 at 9 P.M. *The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. (307-7171). $12–$15.*

Clubland

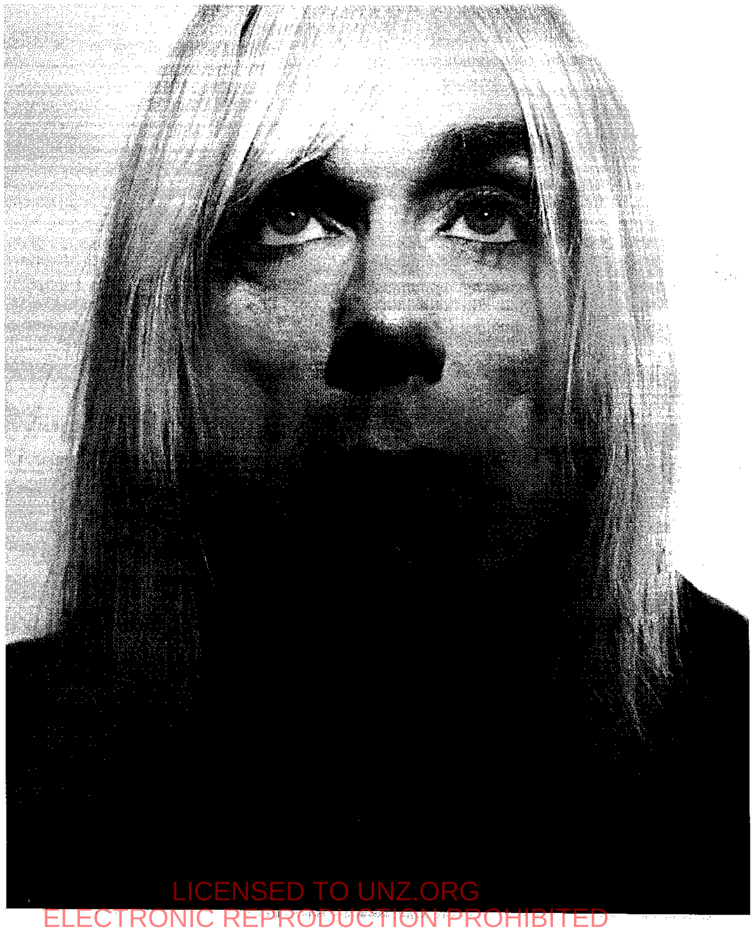
Academy—The Academy's last hurrah is a one-time-only performance of Surrender the Air, an improvisational supergroup featuring members of Phish, Sun Ra Arkestra, and Aquarium Rescue Unit. 4/1–4/2 at 8 P.M. *243 W. 43rd St., bet. Seventh and Eight Aves. (249-8870).*

Bottom Line—A top-notch venue—with great sound, good sight lines, and pretty decent fries. 4/3–4/4: Altan with Paul Brady and Seamus Egan. 4/5: "Writers in the Round," featuring Richard Barone, Freedy Johnston, Jules Shear, and Jill Sobule. 4/10: Taj Mahal. *15 W. 4th St. (228-7880).*

Performance

Our Man Iggy

Still aging well—or at least interestingly—Iggy Pop remains a taut, unrepentant bard of lust and self-abuse. He sings and throws himself about Roseland on April 8.



Photograph by Chris Cuffaro.

Ground Rules:

In clubland, promptness is *not* next to godliness; expect shows to start much later than promised. $ = cash only.

Brownie's—Avenue A's divey post-college rock spot, with good tap beers, on-the-rise bands, and the occasional big name trying to keep a low profile. Cozy and congenial, even if you're not pierced. Shows nightly at 9. *169 Ave. A, at 11th St. (420-8392). $.*

CBGB & OMFUG—Ground zero of punk's stateside explosion and, twenty years later, still a smoking, flier-strewn pit—in a good way. Next door, CB's Gallery offers a more well-heeled atmosphere, with higher-end tap beers and quieter, if no less impassioned, acoustic acts. *315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052). $.*

Chicago B.L.U.E.S.—A downtown blueserie, comfortably down-home, with living-room couches behind the stage. Dedicated to bringing us the best and brightest from the midwestern blues capital. *73 Eighth Ave., bet. 13th and 14th Sts. (924-9755). $.*

Coney Island High—St. Marks, not Coney Island, but still thrills and spills aplenty, with seedy outer-borough ambience and bands picked by Jesse Malin, lead singer of local punk-preservationists D Generation. Every other Saturday night belongs to their famed trash-rock party, "Green Door NYC." *15 St. Marks Pl. (475-9726).*

The Cooler—The meat-packing district's subterranean steel-corridored home to alternative rockers, avant-garde-jazz musicians, and mind-expanding D.J.'s. A sleekly refurbished meat locker with black light, moody atmosphere, and a Patti Smith photo. *416 W. 14th St. (229-0785).*

Fez—Mingus fever and lush *faux*-Moroccan ambience make this the neo-boho place to be on Thursdays, when the mighty Mingus Big Band rocks the house, playing the works of the great, brawling jazz bassist with a freshness and authority rarely seen in jazz today, or ever. 4/2: Zanabe Jah featuring Tony Malmone, Steve Bernstein, Myles O'Connell, and Sally Timms. 4/5: Tara Key. *Time Cafe, 380 Lafayette St. (533-2680).*

Irving Plaza—Festus, Missouri's wonderful country-rockers the Bottle Rockets are the real thing in a scene overflowing with smirky, collegiate wannabes in John Deere hats. Their record titled *The Brooklyn Side* refers to a bowling term, not a borough locale, and the record is full of finely observed vignettes from rural, low-income America and a deeply felt empathy for its residents. That it also sounds a lot like Neil Young only makes the mix better. They play on 4/5. 4/7: Power-pop anxiety from Jawbreaker. 4/9: Stabbing Westward. 4/10: Echobelly. *17 Irving Place. (777-6800).*

Knitting Factory—The Disneyland of downtown music, with three floors, two stages, two microbrew-bearing bars, and some of the biggest names in now music. 4/4: "The Second Seder." 4/5–4/13: Keeping the Passover festivities in full swing, John Zorn's Ornette Coleman–goes–klezmer combo, Masada, plays a nine-day run, rounded out by trumpeter Dave Douglas, bassist Greg Cohen, and the spellbinding Joey Baron on drums. *74 Broadway, bet. Leonard and Church (219-3055).*

Manny's Car Wash—A little Chicago on the Upper East Side. Mondays, beware salivating yuppie swells here for Ladies Night. 4/3: Hiram Bullock with fellow Letterman alum Will Lee. *1558 Third Ave. (369-BLUE).*

Maxwell's—Hoboken's indie-rock central or CBGB West, the site of many of rock's recent groundswells. 4/3: Seven Year Bitch. 4/4–4/6: Jonathan Richman. 4/9: Little Kings (featuring former members of Dion and the Belmonts and the Smithereens). *1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-798-4064).*

Mercury Lounge—Once a headstone parlor, now one of the city's hippest and most congenial music spots, frequently hosting rock and country artists groomed for the more *au courant* time slots of MTV. Thursdays through May, Johns Flansberg and Linnell—the George and Ira Gershwin of manic, melodic quirk-rock—put their delightful band, They Might Be Giants, through its paces. 4/3: L.A.'s loungey doom combo Congo/Norvell play their first show since relocated to New York; Speedball Baby. 4/6: Possum Dixon. 4/8: Cucumbers. 4/9: Silkworm. *217 E. Houston St. (260-4700).*

Paddy Reilly's—The home of the rollicking hip-hop-accented Irish band Black 47 on Saturdays and the punkishly feisty Rogue's March on Sundays. *519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210).*

Sidewalk Cafe—The back-room Fort is the latest home to New York's "anti-folk" scene, featuring impassioned, oft-wacky guitar- and poesy-wielding artists, with the occasional Beat refugee. 4/8: The Antihootenany, featuring Lach. 4/9: Open Jazz Jam, with the Goodrow All-stars. *94 Ave. A. (473-7373).*

Sounds of Brazil—The city's premier world-music venue, presenting many acts that could fill stadia back home. 4/2: Essence All–Stars Sreies featuring the Dr. Lonnie Smith with Tony Purrone and Idris Muhammad. 4/5: Sister Carol. 4/9: Frankie Jackson's Soul Kitchen. 4/10: Skadanks. *204 Varick St. (243-4940).*

The Supper Club—A large, grand ballroom with a starry ceiling and challenging acoustics. Friday and Saturday nights, the fourteen-piece Stan Rubin Orchestra plays classics from the swing era for, as they say, your dancing enjoyment. Rubin's songbook is 1,000 arrangements strong, many of them transcribed from thirties and forties records. *240 W. 47th St. (921-1940).*

Tramps—One of the city's better venues for great roots music and happening indie rock, Tramps eschews high concept for straightforward presentation. Avoid the neck-craning mid-stage column and muddy-sounding areas by getting there early. 4/6: Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown; Little Buster and the Soul Brothers. *51 W. 21st St. (727-7788).*

Wetlands—A groovy club-kid/activist hang with neo-hippie atmosphere and far-flung musical guests. N.B.: Tuesday night is (Grateful) Dead Night. 4/3: The Kosmic Krew is led by founding Kool and the Gang member Michael Ray, who plays Monday in Phish guitarist Trey Anasasio's supergroup Surrender to the Air, and play a rootsy, improvisational music reminiscent of another former employer, Sun Ra. *161 Hudson St. (966-5244).*

Jazz

Birdland—A comfy, two-tiered restaurant with huge bay windows, late-fifties jazz paintings, and striking light fixtures hovering from the ceiling. An uptown jazz outpost, with excellent jazz musicians that play nightly. *2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228).*

Blue Note—Easily the city's highest-ticket jazz spot, the self-titled "jazz capital of the world" often presents two top-flight artists in one evening and, as its empire expands (soon to take Korea with Blue Note Seoul), charges accordingly. 4/2–4/7: Herbie Mann featuring Trio da Paz and Café; recently visa-ed Cuban piano monster Gonzalo Rubalcaba leads a quartet. 4/9–4/14: Joe Sample Trio. Sets at 9 and 11:30. *131 W. 3rd St. (475-8592).*

Bradley's—Jazz's secret garden and, at 25 years, second only to the Village Vanguard for longevity. It's an intimate, dark-paneled restaurant into which some of the city's best jazz musicians creep after hours. 4/6: Kenny Barron. 4/8–4/11: George Cables and Santi Debriano. Sets at 10, midnight, and 2 A.M. *70 University Pl., at 11th St. (473-9700).*

Cajun—A brassy and brightly lit bit of New Orleans in Chelsea, dedicated to Preservation Hall–style Dixieland. 4/5: From Europe, the nine-piece trad-jazz band En Haufe Leit fills the stage. *129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174).*

The Five Spot—Highly rated food and the airy, drop-dead splendor of the old Hotel Wolcott's ballroom. 4/5–4/6: Hilton Ruiz/Dave Valentin Quartet. *7 W. 31st St. (631-0100).*

Iridium Room—The artfully wacky restaurant across from Lincoln Center crosses Dalí with Dr. Seuss in its décor and hosts some formidable jazz comers in its basement. 4/2–4/7: Ahmad Jamal Trio. 4/10–4/15: Ruth Brown and her Quintet. Sets at 8:30 and 10:30, Sun.–Thurs., with extra midnight set Fri. and Sat. *44 W. 63rd St., across from Lincoln Center (582-2121).*

Knickerbocker Bar & Grill—A wood-paneled and brass-railed restaurant with Old New York ambience and excellent—occasionally legendary—pianists. Trumpeter Michael Leonhart and trio play every Sunday in April. *33 University Pl. (228-8490).*

Match—Smart and trendy, this slick SoHo hang grabs some *gravitas* on Monday nights, when the Shorty Jackson Legacy Blues Band holds forth. *160 Mercer St. (343-0020).*

Sardi's—The Joe Traina Quintet has extended its successful Friday-evening engagement here indefinitely, playing jazz, swing, and show tunes with various guest vocalists at 10:30 P.M. No cover, no minimum. *234 W. 44th St., Club Room, 2nd floor (221-8444).*

Small's—A newish, feisty jazz club that stays open all night, offering after-hours jazz until 8 A.M. It's a cozy, candlelit basement whose nightly jams start round about 2 A.M.—the perfect time for a post–Village Vanguard visit (it's right around the corner)—and often involve free beverages and food. Thurs.–Sun., shows start at 10. *183 W. 10th St. (929-7565). $*

Sweet Basil—An intimate downtown restaurant with good food and high-profile jazz acts. Every Sunday, Doc Cheatham plays from 2 to 6. 4/2–4/7: Abraham Burton Quartet. 4/9–4/14: Paul Motian Electric Bebop Band. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra sets Fri. and Sat. at 12:30 A.M. *.88 Seventh Ave. So., at Bleecker St. (242-1785).*

Tavern on the Green—A somewhat overwrought restaurant in a touristy Central Park rest stop, the Tavern's Chestnut Room is still a top-flight jazz club—with excellent sound and a full roster of stars. Wednesday nights, the cover's a scant five bucks. 4/2–4/14: The debonair pianomaster and crooner Buddy Greco duets with singer (and wife) Lezlie Anders. *Central Park at W. 67th St. (873-3200).*

Village Vanguard—Perhaps the world's greatest jazz club, and certainly the most steeped in history, this dark, smoky institution is revered by fans around the world. Study the photos of jazz icons, dig the curtains Miles Davis once played to, and sneak a glance inside the kitchen, an Algonquin Round Table for the bop age. Mondays, the Vanguard Jazz Orchestra swings on. 4/2–4/7: Roy Haynes Quartet. 4/9–4/14: George Coleman Quintet. Sets at 9:30 and 11:30 P.M.and 1 A.M. *178 Seventh Ave. So., at W. 11th St. (255-4037). $.*

Visiones—Spanish food and avant-ish jazz guests, along with some funkified post-boppers. 4/3–4/6: Essiet Okon Essiet's Intercontinental Bush Orches-

Performance

Kosher Jazz

"It's going to be a real Seder," Michael Dorf promises. "We're just tweaking it with some of our own nutsy, cuckoo, meshuggeneh stuff." That the meshuggeneh stuff includes avant-saxophonists and a live teleconference with Jerusalem should be clue enough that the setting for this particular Passover meal is the Knitting Factory—home to a plurality of New York's most adventurous performing artists and, as it happens, one of the most eclectic manifestations of Jewishness in the world. All this should be amply apparent when Dorf, the club's 33-year-old founder, hosts a typically—at least for the Knitting Factory—*interpretive* version of the ceremonial supper. "When I was looking through the Haggadah, I saw that the Seder itself could also be an artistic performance," says Dorf. "For 4,000 years, someone's done the prayer over the wine, saying the same words. Why not allow a musician, say, or a dancer to create a piece that's their expression of what that particular part of the meal means to them?" So, on April 4, 30 like-minded folk—including saxophonist John Zorn (pictured), singer Nora York, and Jazz Passenger Roy Nathanson—will be on hand to do just that, along with helping to consume the gefilte fish, matzoth, and wine that are also mandatory components of the ceremony. Although this Seder will also offer poetry, performance art, and on-line dinner conversation with thousands (www.knittingfactory.com), Dorf prefers that the tenor of the evening remain warm and unpretentious—the sort of qualities that should always keep this ancient Jewish rite in style. "I mean, you're *forced* to drink four glasses of wine," he says, waxing rabbinical. "That's pretty cool."

CHRIS NORRIS

tra featuring the ferocious drummer Jeff "Tain" Watts. 4/10–4/12: Steps Ahead featuring Dave Kikoski, Donny McCasalin, Rodne Holmes, and Richie Goods. Sets at 9 and 11, with extra show Fri. and Sat. at 1 A.M. *125 Macdougal St. (673-5576).*

Comedy

Boston Comedy Club—*Animal House* ambience and, most nights, comedy to match. Wednesdays, Risa Barash hosts Women of Comedy Nights at 9:30. *82 W. 3rd St. (477-1000).*

Caroline's Comedy Club—In Times Square just down the street from the *Letterman* show. 4/2: Ward & Wheeler Variety Show. 4/3: New Talent Night with Eddie Brill. 4/4–4/7: Michael Coylar. 4/8: New Talent Night with Eddie Brill. 4/9: Ward and Wheeler Variety Show. *1626 Broadway, bet. 49th and 50th Sts. (757-4100).*

Comedy Cellar—A physical throwback to sixties Village coffeehouses, this is the late-night subterranean haunt of many of the city's top comics. 4/8–4/14: Greer Barnes; Rick Crom; Todd Barry; Eddie Brill; Larry Amoros. Shows Sun.–Thurs., 9–2. *117 MacDougal St. (254-3480).*

Comic Strip—Probably the most expertly booked club in the city, this showcase offers an eclectic mix of comedians every night of the week. *1568 Second Ave., bet. 81st and 82nd Sts. (861-9386).*

Dangerfield's—Founded by the respect-deprived comedian two decades ago, this Vegas-style lounge is one of the city's oldest comedy establishments. Through 4/7: Quentin Higgs; Brian McFadden; Lenny Varnedoe; Gregory Carey; Jim Gaffigan; Nancy Redman. 4/8–4/14: Mike Robles; John Rizzo; Rich Ramirez; Brian McFadden; Billy Jaye; Quentin Heggs. *1118 First Ave., bet. 61st and 62nd Sts. (593-1650).*

Luna Lounge—Mondays, it's The Show Formerly Known As Rebar. Shows at 8. *171 Ludlow St., at Houston. (260-2323).*

Talent

Cook's Tour

Celebrating a new CD documenting her legendary 1975 concert at Carnegie Hall, Barbara Cook croons down Memory Lane at the Cafe Carlyle through April 27.

New York Comedy Club—Every Friday, the NYCC presents "New York's Best African-American and Latino comics." Every Wed. and Thurs., there's sketch comedy at 7 P.M. Shows Mon.–Fri. at 9, with extra shows Fri. at 7 and 11; Sat. at 6, 7:30, 9:30, and 11:45. *241 E. 24th St. (696-5233).*

Stand-up New York—Robin Williams is known to drop by here unannounced to warm up for his *Letterman* appearances. 4/5–4/7: Gregg Rogell; Dave Attel; Todd Barry; Tom Cotter. Sun.–Thurs. at 9; Fri. at 9 and 11:30; Sat. at 7:30, 9:30, and 11:30. *236 W. 78th St. (595-0850).*

Cabaret

Algonquin Hotel—Through 4/6: Julie Wilson. Tues.–Sat. at 9 (dinner at 7); Fri.–Sat. also at 11:30 (supper at 10:30). $30; $15 minimum. *59 W. 44th St. (840-6800).*

Arcimboldo—On Sunday evenings, this stylish trattoria in the U.N. neighborhood offers "Opera With Taste," a series of programs featuring selected arias performed by a rotating ensemble of up-and-coming young stars from the Metropolitan Opera, at 7 and 8:30. The prix-fixe dinner menu (seatings at 6:15 and 7:45) is $40; no music charge. *220 E. 46th St. (972-4646).*

Asti—Singing-waiter frolics with an emphasis on opera and operetta (frequently shoulder to shoulder *and* bolder and bolder) are the keynote of this Village landmark. No music charge. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105).*

Bemelmans Bar—Pianist and singer Peter Mintun is back for a return engagement here through 5/4. Tuesdays through Saturdays from 9:30 to 1:30. $10 music charge; no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Carlyle—Through 4/27: Barbara Cook. Tues-Sat. at 8:45 and 10:45. $45 cover, no minimum. *Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600).*

Cafe Pierre—Dancing on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 9 to 1, backed up by the romantic stylings of singer-pianist Kathleen Landis and her trio. $10; jacket and tie required. *2 E. 61st St. (940-8185).*

Claire—Jazz vocalist David Downing. Thurs. and Sun. at 9, Fri. and Sat. at 9:30, Sun. at 1. No cover, no minimum. *156 Seventh Ave. (255-1955).*

F. illi Ponte—Pianist-singer David Raleigh rocking the room at the newly renamed BeCa (Below Canal) Bar with his group, the Little Big Band. Wed.–Sat. from 8 to 1. No cover, no minimum. *39 Debrosses St. (226-4621).*

Ibis—This Mediteranean-flavored supper club, popular in the early eighties, has recently reopened with a variety show incorporating song, dance, magic acts, and—what else?—belly dancing. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30, Sun. at 8. Dinner and performance, $45. Performance only: $15 with a $20 minimum Tues.–Thurs., $20 with a $20 minimum Fri.–Sat. *327 W. 44th St. (262-1111).*

La Rivista Ristorante—Singer-pianist Chris Barrett, Tues.–Sat. from 8 to midnight. No cover, no minimum. *313 W. 46th St. (245-1707).*

Michael's Pub—As always, Woody Allen and the New Orleans Funeral & Ragtime Orchestra on Mon. at 8:45 and 11. $35 minimum. *211 E. 55th St. (758-2272).*

Rainbow and Stars—In that *Ocean's Eleven* mood? Then better get yourself down (or up, actually) to Rockefeller Center's dim little room in the sky, where Vic Damone's swinging in *le style classique*, baby. Through 4/27. $40 cover. Tues.–Sat. at 8:30 and 11; dinner required at early shows. *30 Rockefeller Plaza, 65th floor (632-5000).*

Bars

Bar 5757—At the Four Seasons Hotel. This swank mausoleum has thirteen different martinis on its menu. Included among the various fruity mutations is the James Bond Original—yes, you guessed it: "shaken, not stirred." *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700).*

Bar d'O—An elegant and secluded bar on a lost corner in Greenwich Village. Perfect for a rendezvous (whatever your preference). Be sure to catch Joey Arias's delinquent and daring drag show, every Tuesday night. *29 Bedford St., at Downing St. (627-1580).*

Beauty Bar—Another concept bar from the people who bought you No Tell Motel and Babyland. "Beauty parlor"—which the space was quite recently—is the theme and trendy are the clientele, most preferring pierces and home dye jobs to the store-bought variety. (Don't ask for red wine, it's a henna.) *231 E. 14th St., at Second Ave. (539-1389).*

Beekman Bar and Books—A determinedly upscale lounge for men and the women who will marry them. The clientele is much younger than it pretends to be and is very serious about being civilized. Very serious. Very civilized. Expect cigar and whiskey know-it-alls, striped ties and strings of pearls. *889 First Ave., nr. 50th St. (980-9314).*

bOb—A house party in some out-of-town aunt's living room. A tribute to the city's night-crawling diversity—fashion divettes, funksters, losers, and hippie girls. Fat-lady mud wrestling on the televisions above the exit and the bar keeps the traffic at these vital transaction points light. *235 Eldridge St., at Houston St.*

Bowery Bar—Eric Goode's controversial wall boxes out the neighborhood and contains the giddy hipsters within a very cool lounge inspired by a fifties-era Miami Holiday Inn. So happy for a new place to have a genius time, the crowd doesn't seem to mind a bartender in whom a request for a neat bourbon inspires paroxysms of self-doubt. *358 Bowery, at 4th St. (475-2220).*

Brooklyn Inn—The arty and underemployed bang elbows with Brooklyn Law School cutups in this raucous cattle car. The self-consciously cool jukebox is equal parts Tom Waits, the Pogues, and John Coltrane. Pints of Guinness and Schaeffer and everything in between. Ask the regulars about the bartenders: They all have strong opinions. *Bergen St. at Hoyt St., Brooklyn (no phone).*

Den of Thieves—Another thumping downtown concept bar. Comfortable banquettes and some down-on-your-luck linoleum deuces so the regulars can commiserate about how hard it is to be young and fabulous all the time. Gripping rhythm from the D.J. after 11. *145 E. Houston St. (477-5005).*

J. J. Beckett's—With the exception of the occasional overenthusiastic undergrad, most of the folks at the bar look as though they deserve a drink. On Wednesday nights, this Naugahyde-and-pressboard dive hosts the James Begian Three, an earnest, low-key trio that lends plenty of atmosphere. Finally, a destination bar on the Upper West Side that's not a pathetically phony friends-in-low-places theme bar. *Amsterdam Ave., at 90th St. (787-9628).*

Joe's Bar—A truly lousy pool table and a men's room that begs to have its floors pissed on don't detract from the good-time feeling powered by a jukebox that earned this place the moniker "Joe's Cowboy Bar." The urban-beat-cowboy thing among some of the regulars gets a little tired—but only sometimes. *520 E. 6th St. (473-9093).*

Mooney's Pub—Yes, an Irish bar worth a damn on upper Flatbush. Alas, the only one. The regular crowd is a pleasing mix of old-timers, midlifers, and punk kids. The Guinness is always good. *353 Flatbush Ave., nr. Carlton Ave., Brooklyn (718-783-9085).*

Riverrun—A hybrid beer hall–subway tunnel whose most architecturally significant objects are the phone-booth-size pissoirs. Have a beer with Danny, the best bartender in town. And have a boiled egg—they're free. While you're at it, drop a dime in the cheapest jukebox this side of 1940. *176 Franklin St., nr. Hudson St. (966-3894).*

The Rainbow Promenade—Head bartender Dale Degroff has been creating cocktails and perfecting the classics for years, and nothing beats the view at sunset. The line starts on Thursday and lasts all weekend, so drop by early in the week. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5100).*

in concert

Dreyfus Affair...Robert Shaw...Passover Oratorio

Classical Music

Tuesday, April 2

Brentano String Quartet—With clarinetist David Shifrin, performs works by Berg and Mozart. *Rose Building, tenth floor, Lincoln Center (875-5788), at 6:45; $15.*

Robert Shaw and the Orchestra of St. Luke's—Performs Bach's *St. Matthew Passion. Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 7; $15–$75.*

New York Chamber Symphony—With pianist Lorin Hollander, performs works by Satie/Diamond and Dvořák. *92nd St. Y, at Lexington Ave. (996-1100), at 7:30; $30.*

Emory Chamber Music Society—Performs works by Dwight Andrews, Stephen Paulus, and John Anthony Lennon. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $15.*

Juilliard Orchestra—Performs works by Mozart and Stravinsky; Otto-Werner Mueller, conductor. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (769-7406), at 8; free.*

Russell Sherman, Pianist—Performs Brahms, Beethoven, and the premiere of Robert Helps's *Shall We Dance? Miller Theater, Broadway at 116th St. (854-7799), at 8; $16.*

Wednesday, April 3

Wednesdays at One—Juilliard students perform music for winds, harp, and guitar. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 1; free.*

Thursday, April 4

Lillian Sage, Organist—Performs works by Alain and others. *St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St., at noon; free.*

Christensen-Fredriksen Duo—Perform works by Schubert, Sibelius, and Nielson. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15.*

Friday, April 5

Children's Chorales—Perform works by Brahms, Handel, and Crocker. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $10–$20.*

Saturday, April 6

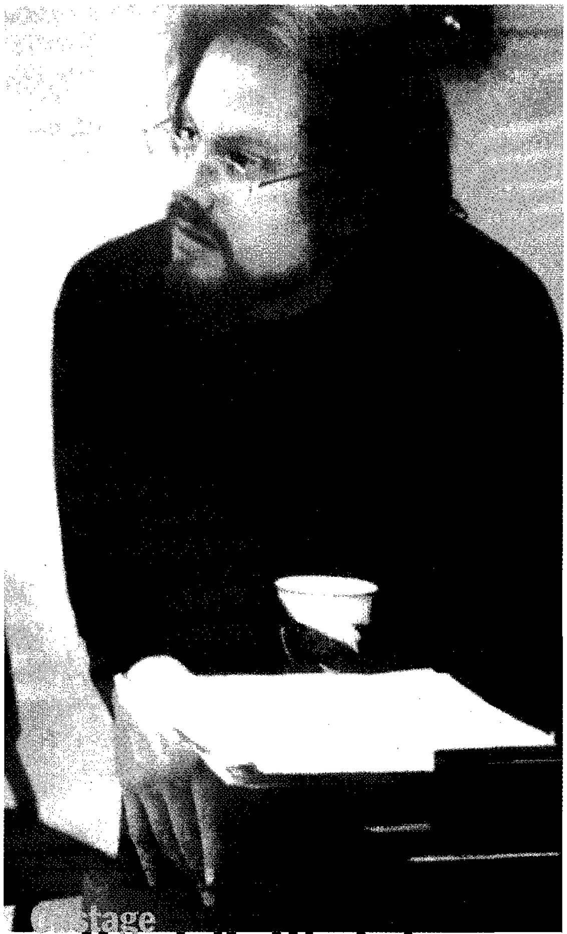
Tweed Easter Extravaganza—A variety show featuring downtown habitués Lady Bunny, Lypsinka, and Charles Busch. *Alice Tully Hall, Lincoln Center (721-6500), at 8; $35–$60.*

Dayenu—New York Choral Society Chorus and Orchestra performs a Passover oratorio by Paul Alan Levy. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$42.*

Ambient Music—The Deep Listening Band, followed by the Kitchen's monthly TONE event. *The Kitchen, 512 West 19th St. (307-7171), at 9; $15.*

Ground Rules:

This section emphasizes classical concerts, recitals, and public square/park performances (but only the premeditated ones), and includes the occasional jazz concert if it is held, say, outdoors or in a public space. For rock concerts and club information, see "Nightlife."



Onstage

Handel's Workshop

Conductor (and New York *Times* writer) Will Crutchfield directs a semi-staged version of the composer's rarely seen 1724 opera, *Tamerlano,* as part of the Manhattan School of Music's ongoing Handel Project. Performed at Merkin Concert Hall on April 1 and MSM's John C. Borden Auditorium on April 2, the production serves as a workshop for young singers interested in eighteenth-century vocal practices.

Photograph by Enrique del Burgo.

Sunday, April 7

New England Symphonic Ensemble—Performs works by Thompson and Handel. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 2; $10–$49.*

Duo Assad—Brasilian guitar works by Marlos Nobre, Hermeto Pascoal, and Sérgio Assad. Part of the Sonidos de las Américas: Brasil festival. *Thalia Spanish Theatre, 41-17 Greenpoint Ave., Queens (718-729-3880), at 4; $15.*

Monday, April 8

Contemporary Music Festival—Premieres of works by Kaija Saariaho, Dave Heath, and John Tavener. *Mannes College of Music, 150 W. 85th St. (580-0210), at 8; free.*

Piano Duo Schnabel—Perform works by Schubert, Bizet, and Schumann. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (501-3330), at 8; $17.*

Duo Diálogos—Performs works by Chagas, Tacuchian, and Rescala as part of the Sonidos de las Américas: Brasil festival. *Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15.*

Carlo Bergonzi, Tenor—Performs Neapolitan favorites. *Carnegie Hall, 881 Seventh Ave., at 57th St. (247-7800), at 8; $15–$60.*

Speculum Musicae—Performs works by Druckman, Ades, and Hindemith. *Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 West 69th St. (865-9028), at 8; $10.*

Opera

Metropolitan Opera—Glass's *The Voyage*, 4/2 at 8, 4/6 at 1:30; Strauss's *Salome*, 4/3 at 8:30; Gounod's *Roméo et Juliette*, 4/4 at 8, 4/8 at 8; Verdi's *La Forza del Destino*, 4/5 at 8; Giordano's *Andrea Chénier*, 4/6 at 8. *Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center (362-6000); $23–$175.*

New York City Opera—Presents the American premiere of Jost Meier's *The Dreyfus Affair*, based on the infamous turn-of-the-century French anti-Semitism case, as part of the City Opera's Freedom Cycle on 4/2 at 8 and 4/5 at 8. Accompanied by an exhibition. Verdi's *Attila*, 4/4 at 8; Strauss's *Der Rosenkavalier*, 4/6 at 1:30; Léhar's *The Merry Widow*, 4/7 at 1:30; Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, 4/6 at 8. *New York State Theater, 20 Lincoln Center (870-5570); $17–$78.*

Tamerlano—Manhattan School of Music's Handel Project presents this 1724 opera on two nights. 4/1 at 7:30. *Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. (362-8719).* 4/2 at 7:30. *John C. Borden Auditorium, Broadway and 122nd St. (749-2802, ext. 428); $20.*

Dance

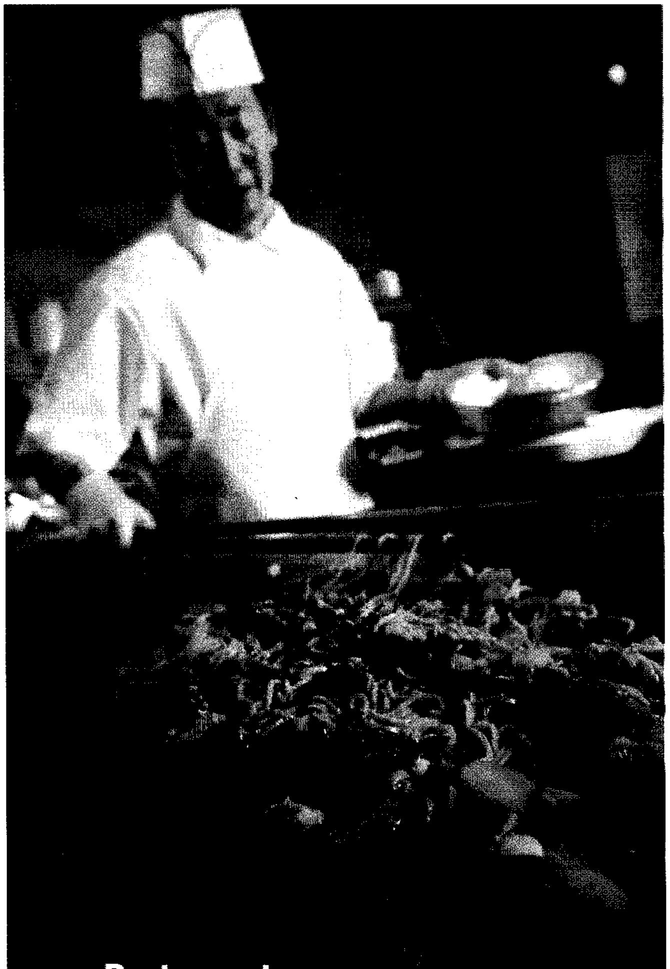
Avant Garde Arama—Performance art, film, and dance by Laurie MacFarlance, Guta Hedewig, and Orgasm Reflex, among others. 4/5 and 4/6 at 9. *P.S. 122, 150 First Ave. (477-5288); $12.*

My House Was Collapsing Toward One Side—Dawn Akemi Saito and Charles L. Mee Jr.'s solo piece. 4/4–6 at 8, 4/7 at 3. *Bessie Schönberg Theater, 219 W. 19th St. (924-0077); $15.*

Dancemakers—Toronto-based modern dance company presents work including *Sable/Sand* and *Chronicles of a Simple Life*. 4/2–4/6 at 8, 4/6 and 4/7 at 2, 4/7 at 7:30. *Joyce Theater, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. (242-0800); $25.*

restaurants

Beach Party...More Barocco...Gage & Tollner



Restaurant Upper Mongolia

Downstairs, it's a typical Korean deli; upstairs, the new Food Plaza attracts salad barflies with a "Mongolian bar," where meat, fish, noodles, and vegetables are stir-fried to order. Just what *is* Mongolian food? A cashier offers this helpful description: "It's like Genghis Khan, you know?" (14 East 44th Street.)

Manhattan

Lower New York

Alison on Dominick—An impeccably turned-out room with blue banquettes and tender lighting. Perfectionist owner Alison Becker Hurt makes sure that all is well. *38 Dominick St., nr. Hudson St. (727-1188). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Baluchi's—Indian fare served in a cozy, comfortable atmosphere in the center of SoHo. Have a seat on a patchwork chair amid fantastic imported treasures. *193 Spring St., bet. Thompson and Sullivan Sts. (226-2828). Also, 1565 Second Ave., nr. 81st St. (288-4810). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Bo Ky—This very basic Chinatown spot has been dishing up delicious noodle soups to the neighborhood since before the Mees and Tang Tangs sprouted uptown. Expect to share a table. *80 Bayard St. (406-2292). (I) ($).*

Bouley—Born to French parents and raised on his grandparents' farm in Connecticut, David Bouley knows the basics of classic French cooking, but he's given them his own signature style. Reserve weeks in advance, especially for Friday or Saturday night. There's a prix fixe at lunch and a six-course degustation at dinner. *165 Duane St., nr. Hudson St. (608-3852). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Chanterelle—Spare and elegant, virtually religious, this TriBeCa restaurant is a favorite among those who want a Big Deal. Chef David Waltuck runs a grand kitchen—seafood sausage, cold fruit soups, and anything he does with truffles in season. Wife Karen runs the front room with class and warmth. *2 Harrison St., at Hudson St. (966-6960). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Diva—Another hip spot on the nexus of a hip neighborhood, with Italian specialties like homemade gnocchi and lobster-stuffed black ravioli. Iron candelabras and scarlet walls set the perfect sexy downtown mood. *341 W. Broadway, nr. Broome St. (941-9024). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Gigino Trattoria—The rustic Italian fare in this barnlike TriBeCa trattoria ranges from brick-oven pizza and calzones to salmon with broccoli rabe. The casual atmosphere and fresh, inventive peasant food have already gained a loyal neighborhood following. *323 Greenwich St. (431-1112). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hudson River Club—From this Frank Lloyd Wright–ish dining room in the World Financial Center, you can see the Statue of Liberty. But then, the Hudson River figures prominently so many ways here. Chef Waldy Malouf uses farmers and their produce from along the Hudson River valley to reinvent traditional American fare. *4 World Financial Center (786-1500). (E) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Kelley and Ping—The type of funky, lofty noodle house that could only exist—and thrive—in SoHo. *127 Greene St., nr. Prince St. (228-1212). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

L'Ecole—This modern French bistro is unique in that its chefs are students from the French Culinary Institute. Special three- and five-course menus are available, so come with either an empty stomach or a doggie bag. Private parties. Closed Sundays. *462 Broadway, at Grand St. (219-3300). (M) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Le Pescadou—This innovative Provençal bistro serves fresh seafood enhanced by a variety of infused oils. Oyster fans will find a wide variety of fresh ones. *18 King St., at Sixth Ave. (924-3434). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Match—A SoHo loft space with a surprisingly creative modern American menu, a full sushi bar, and up-to-the-minute accoutrements like a D.J. and a jazz band. If all that hip posing makes you hungry, try fusion fare like wok-seared bluefin tuna with warm soba-noodle salad or spit-roasted duck with potato dumplings. *160 Mercer St. (343-0020). (M–E) AE, MC, V.*

Montrachet—Owner Drew Nieporent now has five places in New York, including Nobu, Layla, TriBakery and Tribeca Grill, and another in San Francisco. But this is his baby—attractive, lively, and one of the first truly great restaurants in lower Manhattan. There's lunch on Fridays—try the Roquefort-and-pear salad—and dinner Monday through Saturday. *239 W. Broadway, nr. White St. (219-2777). (E) AE only.*

Nick and Eddie—If every neighborhood had a corner comfort-food port like this one, most of us would never leave. So we travel to this muted room with the other strivers, hustlers, strictly business types, and family-night-outers who flock to feel like part of the woodwork. *203 Spring St., at Sullivan St. (219-9090). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Nobu—The great Nobu Matsuhisa—actually, he's young, good-looking, and incredibly hip—has arrived in TriBeCa. And New Yorkers haven't tasted Japanese cooking like this—unless, of course, they've visited Matsuhisa's restaurant in L.A. *105 Hudson St. (219-0500). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Odeon—Downtown has fallen in love all over again with this TriBeCa institution. The bar's out of Dashiell Hammett, and the dining room gets everyone from the banker, his wife, and their 2-year-old to movie stars, artists, and assorted big-deal celebrities. *145 W. Broadway, nr. Thomas St. (233-0507). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Raoul's—The dull roar in this cavelike bistro—aging gracefully amid the high-strung Thoroughbreds of SoHo's restaurant racetrack—is a heartwarming sound. *180 Prince St., nr. Thompson St. (966-3518). (M) AE, MC, V.*

SoHo Kitchen and Bar—Grape nuts celebrate the 96-spigot Cruvinet, ordering flights of Cabernets or seven Pinot Noirs to taste and compare, but SoHo neighbors love it, too—for all those beers on tap, for the thin-crust pizza, for a glance at the game on the TV overhead. *103 Greene Street., nr. Prince St. (925-1866). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Tennessee Mountain—An 1807 landmark farmhouse, this BBQ joint serves up chicken and ribs that you're not likely to forget. Bring those breath mints and Handi-Wipes for all-you-can-eat on Monday night. *143 Spring St. (431-3993). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Tribeca Grill—Though this spacious, brick-walled restaurant sometimes serves as canteen for the film execs (and movie stars) in offices upstairs, the creative American cuisine and lively bar scene make it a popular downtown destination. Known for its roasted meats and fish specials. *375 Greenwich St., at Franklin St. (941-3900). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Photograph by Warren Salowe.

Ground Rules:

Here lie a few hundred of the city's more noteworthy restaurants, some *New York* advertisers among them. The price guide, admittedly imperfect, is as follows: (E) = expensive, $35 and over per place; (M) = moderate, $15–$30 per place; (I) = inexpensive, $15 and under per place.

Following each listing there is also a code indicating acceptable methods of payment: ($) = cash only, AE = American Express, CB = Carte Blanche, DC = Diners Club, DS = Discover, M = MasterCard, TM = Transmedia, V = Visa. "AE only" indicates that American Express is the only accepted charge/credit card.

Below 14th Street, East

Asti—This 70-year-old Village mainstay epitomizes the concept of the singing waiter. Professional opera singers perform arias and show tunes while waiters manage to carry a tune *and* serve orders of seafood fra diavolo, Maine lobsters, and Black Angus steak. *13 E. 12th St. (741-9105). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Gotham Bar & Grill—Alfred Portale's kitchen, with its architectural ingenuity and whimsical creativity, serves as a finishing school for the city's all-star chefs before they launch their own careers. This awesome dining temple has long been a staple. *12 E. 12th St. (620-4020). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Miracle Grill—This is what Bobby Flay did before Mesa Grill, and some regulars still prefer the low-key, casual atmosphere and the lively garden out back. The grilled vegetable plate surpasses most. *112 First Ave., nr. 7th St. (254-2353). (I–M) AE, MC, V.*

Three of Cups—Proving that the East Village has room enough for another wood-burning oven pizza parlor besides Two Boots. The "mickey," a charred spud dripping with butter, shouldn't be missed. *83 First Ave., at 5th St. (388-0059). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Below 14th Street, West

Andalousia—This relatively undiscovered Village Moroccan rightly prides itself on its roster of tagines and couscous specials. B'stilla is a standout. *28 Cornelia St. (929-3693). (I) MC, V.*

Da Silvano—Trattoria with tables out front converts this thoroughfare into a people promenade. Great food and views of the local color. Yes, that was Anna Wintour. *260 Sixth Ave., nr. Bleecker St. (982-2343). (M) AE, MC, V.*

El Charro Español—Heaps of thoughtfully prepared authentic Spanish cooking. Do yourself a favor and sample the hearty paella and the house sangria. A sleeper worth getting in on. *4 Charles St., nr. Seventh Ave. (242-9547). (M) AE, CB, MC, V.*

Le Zoo—The newest West Village scene, with lots of Left Bank ambience. The menu sticks to standards like poulet grand mère, saumon en croute, and cassolette. *314 W. 11th St. (620-0393). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Rose Cafe—This quiet and casual American bistro draws a diverse crowd. One of the only places where you can go and sit on Fifth Avenue and not break the bank. *24 Fifth Ave., at 9th St. (260-4118). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Opening

Cream of the Crop

Butterfat addicts awaiting the reopening of Custard Beach and the return of eggy, luscious frozen custard need wait no longer: This is the week. And for those with a little restraint, there's a new line of homemade Italian ices. (33 East 8th Street.)

Sevilla—Regulars flock to this popular old-world Village spot for its famed paella à la Valenciana and chicken Villarcy. Be prepared to overdose on garlic. *62 Charles St. (929-3189). (M) ($).*

Ye Waverly Inn—This shrine to Colonial times offers American standards like chicken potpie, baked peasant meatloaf, Indian pudding, and hot mulled wine. The room in the landmark building, dated to 1844, has *three* working fireplaces, and is decorated, in true Laura Ashley fashion, with lace curtains and floral wallpaper. *16 Bank St. (929-4377). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, East Side

An American Place—This venerable midtown spot is to New York as Chez Panisse is to Berkeley. With his eclectic American menu, Larry Forgione made the national cuisine interesting again. *2 Park Ave., at 32nd St. (684-2122). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Campagna—The *Late Show With David Letterman* crowd is at one table, Time Warner honchos are at another, and isn't that . . .? Despite the frenzy of having become Media Central, this smart little trattoria serves some of the most satisfying Italian food in Manhattan. Chef Mark Straussman is to thank for dishes like rabbit in polenta, gnocchi with wild mushrooms and truffle oil, and grilled tuna with beets. *24 E. 21st St. (460-0900). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

The Cigar Room at Trumpets—This clubby hotel dining room features hearty American fare like steaks, chops, and seafood, should you feel like eating. The *real* specialty is the menu of 25 cigars from Nat Sherman and Davidoff of Geneva, any of which would be well-paired with a single-malt scotch. Jackets required. *Grand Hyatt New York, Park Ave. at Grand Central Terminal (850-5999). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

El Parador Cafe—Very possibly the oldest Mexican restaurant in New York City, this comfortable, old-world establishment is known for its enormous selection of premium tequilas and traditional dishes like mole poblano, carnitas, and duck with cuipotle glaze. *325 E. 34th St. (679-6812). (M) MC, TM, V.*

Hudson Place—This Murray Hill newcomer serves a varied selection of Italian and American dishes, including angel's-hair pasta with Scottish smoked salmon, Black Angus steak, and rack of baby back ribs. Hudson River scenes enliven the wood-panelled décor. *538 Third Ave., at 36th St. (686-6660). (M) AE, MC, V.*

i Trulli—A Southern Italian restaurant that aims to prove that tomato sauce is not crucial for survival, i Trulli succeeds with tasty focaccia, homemade sausage, tripe, and venison. In warm weather, the garden is a perfect midtown escape. *122 E. 27th St. (481-7372). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Mesa Grill—Chef Bobby Flay believes in big flavors and big portions. He developed his own signature style, borrowing from the flavors and ingredients of the American Southwest. Loud, stylish, and loads of fun. Great quesadillas. *102 Fifth Ave., nr. 16th St. (807-7400). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Patria—Zesty Latin American fare brought to you in a festive high-energy atmosphere. The three-story dining room suits the changing mood of diners: bright and airy by day (try the new Sunday brunch, with live Inca jazz) and warm and earthy by night. Chef Doug Rodriguez comes from Miami via a childhood in Brooklyn. Really. And Ariel Lacayo may be the coolest maître d' in town. Try the Mojito, Patria's signature drink made from sugarcane. *250 Park Ave. So., nr. 20th St. (777-6211). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Union Square Cafe—The careful service, human-scale dining rooms, and peerless California café cuisine make this one of the best restaurants in the city. *21 E. 16th St. (243-4020). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

14th–42nd Streets, West Side

Appetito Ristorante—A good bet in midtown for Italian food like black linguine with seafood sauce. *47 W. 39th St. (391-5286). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bright Food Shop—A Chelsea luncheonette with an innovative, healthy Mexican menu with Asian influences. Excellent desserts and a great selection of Mexican fruit sodas. *216 Eighth Ave., at 21st St. (243-4433). (I–M) ($).*

Bryant Park Grill—This long-awaited restaurant on the edge of the city's prettiest pocket park has been mobbed from day one. Go at an off-hour for Caesar salad, New York steak, soft-shell crabs, and scallion pancakes. *40th St., between Fifth and Sixth Aves. (840-6500). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Cafe Americanstyle—An ideal rest stop for Lord & Taylor shoppers, whether they're simply grabbing a bite or resting their weary feet for hours. American fare in a simple setting. A welcome respite from the unruly retail throng. *424 Fifth Ave., nr. 39th St. (391-3344). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cal's—A converted warehouse in the Flatiron district serving Continental Mediterranean fare in a relaxed, loft-like atmosphere. The bar menu's burger is one of the best. *55 W. 21st St. (929-0740). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Da Umberto—Low-key Chelsea façade belies the extraordinary Italian offerings inside. Getting a table is no small task, especially in the evening. This is a Euro–New York crossroads. A mad cacophony of laughter and chatter in Brooklynese and Roman. Don't dress down. *107 W. 17th St. (989-0303). (E) AE only.*

Flowers—A fashionable Flatiron restaurant with surprisingly tasty and innovative food and a lively atmosphere. Sample the chef's modern renderings of shrimp rolls, baby lamb chops and baked Alaska. *21 W. 17th St. (691-8888). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Luma—Luma used to be famous for its nutritional asceticism: no meat, no fat, no fun. Now the only restriction is the chef's efforts to use organic ingredients. Butter, beef, and crème brûlée abound. Enjoy. *200 Ninth Ave., at 22nd St. (633-8033). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

World Yacht—Take an out-of-town visitor to see the sights—all of them—over dinner. The luxury yacht boards at six, and sails from seven until ten. *Pier 81, W. 41st St. and the Hudson River (630-8100). (E) AE, MC, V.*

43rd–56th Streets, East Side

Black Finn Bar & Restaurant—A place boasting all the elements to satisfy overtaxed office workers: happy hour, TVs, a fireplace, and a friendly attitude toward cigar smoke. The Cajun menu offers spicy stuff like chicken-and-sausage jambalaya and blackened shrimp po'boys. *994 Second Ave., nr. 52nd St. (355-6993). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Café Centro—A big, shiny brasserie-cum-café in the lobby of the MetLife Building; there's inventive cooking going on here, and the joint is as fun and good as non-expensive midtown gets. In the loud little Beer Bar, get one of the best hamburgers in town. Closed Sunday. *200 Park Ave., 45th St. at Vanderbilt Ave. (818-1222). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Four Seasons—Philip Johnson designed this cathedral of modernity. Picasso did the tapestry. And the place remains a classic 30 years later. The Grill Room is where the term *power lunch* got its start in the seventies. The pool room is where the rest of us go for achingly expensive fare like foie gras and figs and chocolate velvet. *99 E. 52nd St. (754-9494). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Fresh Basil's Trattoria—This casual midtown Italian restaurant prides itself on its friendly service and contemporary atmosphere. Try the gnocchi Aurora, the seafood pescatore, or the grilled veal chop with portobello mushrooms. *663 Lexington Ave., nr. 55th St. (888-4292). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Giambelli 50th Ristorante—Elegant Northern Italian fare served in a warm and cozy atmosphere. *46 E. 50th St. (688-2760). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lespinasse—Marie Antoinette, where are you? This ultra-formal dining room in the St. Regis Hotel—think Versailles and you get the rococo drift—is where you'll find Gray Kunz's inventive Franco-Oriental cooking. The $46 prix fixe at lunch is a gentle introduction to exactly what wonders chef Kunz can perform. *2 E. 55th St., in the St. Regis Hotel (753-4500). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lutèce—The name is still synonymous with dishes like Dover sole, cassoulet, and rack of lamb. After three decades of defining traditional French cuisine, master chef André Soltner ceded the reins to relative innovator Eberhard Müller. The kitchen still astonishes. *249 E. 50th St. (752-2225). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Morton's of Chicago—This midwestern import has taken Manhattan by storm, winning converts with its tender double porterhouse and men's club charm. Hard to believe it's a chain. *551 Fifth Ave., at 45th St. (972-3315). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Ristorante De Grezia—A midtown spot, popular among the neighborhood's businessmen, serving gourmet Northern Italian cuisine. *231 E. 50th St. (750-5353). (E) AE, MC, V.*

San Martin's—Continental cuisine with big, squishy booths. Eurocafé feel bolstered by a selection of foreign dailies on the tables out front. *143 E. 49th St. (832-0888). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Shinbashi—Authentic Japanese cuisine, including tempura, sukiyaki, teriyaki, and sushi, served in elegant surroundings. *280 Park Ave., at 48th St. (661-3915). Also, Shinbashi-an, 141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Shinbashi-an—Sophisticated midtown spot for Japanese food, with specialties including tempura, sukiyaki, shabu shabu, and sushi in a sleekly modern setting. Closed Saturday. *141 E. 48th St. (752-0505). (M–E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Smith & Wollensky—Carnivores keep this popular steakhouse jumping. All wood and brass, it has the look of a private men's club, the noise of a locker room, and a serious wine cellar. *Third Ave. at 49th St. (753-1530). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Torremolinos—This casual midtown restaurant serves a variety of Spanish regional dishes, like paella Valenciana and Castilian-style rack of baby lamb. *230 E. 51st St. (755-1862). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Tropica—Always packed at lunch, but squeeze in at the bar and order the salmon and a glass of tropical iced tea. The dining room serves the most imaginative seafood in town, but be sure to go on a weekday—the restaurant, located in the lobby of the MetLife Building, is closed Saturday and Sunday. *200 Park Ave., nr. 45th St. (867-6767). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Vong—Wow! This is Thai to die for. Chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten's little Third Avenue–by–way–of–Bangkok palace was designed by architect David Rockwell, and it's a showy temple indeed—there's gold leaf on those walls. The menu's full of wonders, starting with the crab rolls and coconut-milk-and-galangal soup. *200 E. 54th St. (486-9592). (E) AE, CB, MC, V.*

Zarela—A festive Mexican restaurant with a menu that lives up to its margarita-fueled bar scene, Zarela is known for its authentic regional cuisine. Try the red-snapper hash, chipotle-grilled salmon, tequila-braised chicken, and homemade tamales. *953 Second Ave., nr. 50th St. (644-6740). (M–E) AE, DC.*

43rd–56th Streets, West Side

Adrienne—The Art Nouveau elegance and hush make this a perfect spot for an illicit tryst or a business lunch. A United Nations of flavors. *700 Fifth Ave., at 55th St., in the Peninsula. (247-2200). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

American Festival Cafe—Lunch inside this glamorized eatery with rotating American folk art. Skaters in winter and a garden in the summer and early fall make for fierce window-seat competition. Seven hours' free parking after 5:30 P.M. *Rockefeller Plaza, 20 W. 50th St. (332-7620). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bello—Locals flock here for generous portions of well-priced Northern Italian served in a casually elegant atmosphere. Free parking from four till closing. *863 Ninth Ave., at 56th St. (246-6773). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Bombay Palace—This casually elegant Indian restaurant has been serving its refined versions of tandoori lobster, lamb kandhari, and chicken kashmiri to a midtown office crowd for years. Try the excellent selection of Indian breads. *30 W. 52nd St. (541-7777). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Broadway Joe—Located in a townhouse on Restaurant Row, this steakhouse serves a fourteen-ounce prime rib but also delivers fresh seafood and pasta for the omnivore. Hirschfeld caricatures cover the walls, so come find your NINAS while you dine. Free dinner parking. Private parties. *315 W. 46th St. (246-6513). (M–E) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Cafe Un Deux Trois—Theater District landmark serving French bistro food like steak au poivre, steak tartare, and grilled salmon. *123 W. 44th St. (354-4148). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Century Cafe—Theater-district cafe popular among actors and fans alike, with a prix-fixe menu and American fare like filet mignon and grilled salmon. *132 W. 43rd St. (398-1988). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Ciao Europa—Midtown Italian in an elegant, castlelike setting, with ceiling-high murals painted in 1937. Regulars swear by the pasta and desserts. *63 W. 54th St. (247-1200). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Cité—An extravagant French steakhouse, marble and pewter with blazing chandeliers, and a more affordable grill next door. *120 W. 51st St. (956-7100). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Dish of Salt—Dependable Cantonese cuisine for the nine-to-fivers who gather at the bar under this vaulted ceiling after work. A piano player bangs out show tunes every night. *133 W. 47th St. (921-4242). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

"44"—Still the first stop for the officers of the Condé Nast empire. Deeply plush, windowless décor feels like the center of the Earth. Given the theatricality, surprisingly terrific food. *44 W. 44th St., in the Royalton (944-8844). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Frankie and Johnnie's Steakhouse—The oldest speakeasy in the city. In the same location in the theater district since 1926. Try the steaks and the chops. Yes, that was Tom Selleck. *269 W. 45th St. (997-9494). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Halcyon—Elegant setting and carefully presented food. Pretheater dinner is a bargain. *151 W. 54th St., in the Rihga Royal Hotel. (468-8888). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Julian's—This casual Mediterranean restaurant doesn't get as frenetic as its sister establishment next door, but it still qualifies as a fun place to dine in Hell's Kitchen. The menu offers grilled swordfish, sautéed chicken breasts with grapes and pine nuts, and a range of Sicilian and Southern Italian specialties. *802 Ninth Ave. (262-4288). (I–M) AE, DS, TM.*

La Bonne Soupe—Checked tablecloths, steak frites, onion soup, and crème caramel to fall in love with. Twenty years ago, long before New Yorkers knew they loved casual French dining, this midtown mainstay set the pace. *48 W. 55th St. (586-7650). (I) AE, MC, V.*

La Côte Basque—Jean-Jacques Rachou's transplanted shrine to French cooking has preserved the Basque murals and the cod-

ect of Desire

Foreign Terrine

We're in the nineties now: The celebrated foie gras chefs at D'Artagnan have, for the first time, dispensed with animal products—eggs, cream, and liver—to concoct a vegan terrine. Chickpea flour binds the layers of vegetables. (Available at Balducci's and Zabar's.)

Photograph by Erik Rank.

dled atmosphere of the original location one block east. Modernized, with a menu more "American with a French accent," and Richard Leach in charge of elaborate pastry design, the old-world institution has been successfully reborn. Open Sundays. *60 W. 55th St. (688-6525). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Reserve—Justifiably crowded during pre-curtain times; stop by during odd hours for sophisticated French offerings and environs. *4 W. 49th St. (247-2993/299). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

La Veranda—Northern Italian food. A popular spot in the theater district offering generous portions of fish, seafood, veal chops and pasta. *163 W. 47th St. (391-0905). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Langan's—American cuisine in a clublike setting. Food ranges from Black Angus steaks to crab cakes and seafood. A trendy, well-heeled crowd at the much-frequented bar mixes with theatergoers in the dining room. *150 W. 47th St. (869-5482). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Lattanzi—Reliable Italian in a romantic garden. Go when there's no danger of a curtain rising or falling soon for special attention. *361 W. 46th St. (315-0980). (M) AE only.*

Le Bernardin—French-born Eric Ripert carries forth the quest of his predecessor, the late Gilbert Le Coze, for the world's most spectacular seafood. His ambitious signature dishes—scallops and foie gras with truffles, Spanish-style mackerel in Jerez vinegar, saddle of monkfish—have already won a very loyal following. *155 W. 51st St. (489-1515). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Le Rivage—Pretheater bistro: reasonable prices, efficient service, and satisfying fare. *340 W. 46th St. (765-7374). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Les Pyrenées—French Provençal cuisine. Cassoulet from Toulouse recommended, as well as filet mignon and frogs' legs. A rustic atmosphere. A lot of theatergoers. *251 W. 51st St. (246-0044; 24). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Limoncello—Sophisticated Italian restaurant serving specialties like fennel salad with blood oranges and balsamic vinegar and mussel soup with garlic and chili peppers. Leave room for the tirami su. *777 Seventh Ave., nr. 50th St. (582-7932). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Martini's—Convenient for pre- and posttheater, with a buzzing year-round sidewalk café and chef Richard Krause's rustic homemade pastas, charcoal-grilled seafood, and wood-oven pizza. *810 Seventh Ave., at 53rd St. (767-1717). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Osteria del Circo—The restaurant of the moment, partly because of its excellent bloodlines (Sirio Maccioni's brood of charming sons runs the place) and partly because of its flavorful, home-style Italian menu. Be sure to try anything created by proud mother (and food consultant) Mrs. Maccioni. *120 W. 55th St. (265-3636). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Patsy's—If it's good enough for Frank, it's good enough for you. Upscale Neapolitan eatery rooted in the glorious fifties. *236 W. 56th St. (247-3491). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Rainbow Room—"Where troubles melt like lemon drops," boasts this perch in the sky. The restaurant is 65 stories up and more than 60 years old, and its stellar views of New York give it reason to gloat. Romantic, with a solid Continental menu. Jacket and tie required. *30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Roadhouse America—On the spot of the late, lamented Lone Star Roadhouse, a new restaurant/music venue has emerged. Roadhouse serves regional American cuisine like jambalaya, Missouri chicken-fried steak, and Texas short-rib chili to the accompaniment of nightly live entertainment. *240 W. 52nd St. (489-2323). (I–M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Ruth's Chris Steakhouse—A steak cooked in butter is the centerpiece of this successful upscale chain's take-no-prisoners march east across the country. Steak served in a series of connected, muted, and wood-paneled dining rooms. *148 W. 51st St. (245-9600). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

The Sea Grill—Plush, cozy dining room open to garden tables in the summer and offers a view of the Rockefeller Center skating rink in winter. The serving team does cartwheels toting crab cakes with two sauces, mint-touched carpaccio of yellowfin-tuna mignon, and swordfish steak at premium prices. *Rockefeller Plaza, 19 W. 49th St. (332-7610). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Stage Delicatessen—A landmark deli that serves gigantic sandwiches, every one of which is worth returning for. *834 Seventh Ave., nr. 54th St. (245-7850). (I) AE, MC, V.*

'21' Club—The new, old, younger '21' has lost its hauteur at the door but not its toys in the artfully restored saloon. Club classics alongside contemporary whimsy at prices that stagger, but from 10:30, supper is a bargain. *21 W. 52nd St. (582-7200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

57th–60th Streets

Brooklyn Diner USA—"The Finer Diner" serves a gourmet reworking of the foods of everyone's favorite borough, from fragrant chicken soup with challah to a "fifteen-bite hot dog," with refreshments like Penfolds Cabernet and chocolate malts. *212 W. 57th St. (581-8900). (I–M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Contrapunto—Join the queue in this good-looking, second-story pastaria for slightly Americanized Italian classics. *200 E. 60th St. (751-8616). (M) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Dawat—You can't miss with tandoori—cooked before your eyes in the big ovens in the back—or with any of the more unusual regional specials. Actress and cookbook author Madhur Jaffrey is responsible for the very popular and wide-ranging menu. *210 E. 58th St. (355-7555). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven—The country's entertainment-industry glitterati make themselves right at home at I. M. Pei's monumental dining room. Susan Weaver is one of the only working chefs to combine contemporary presentation and technique with classic Provençal on one plate. The weekend bar scene puts the concept-hotel bar scene to shame. *57 E. 57th St. (758-5700). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Les Célébrités—Plush and old-fashioned, this imposing dining room in the Essex House on Central Park South also happens to have a very fine kitchen. Dinner only. *160 Central Park So. (484-5113). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

The Manhattan Ocean Club—Savor your seafood in an elegant dining room decorated with Picasso ceramics and Brazilian-red-cherry floors. *57 W. 58th St. (371-7777). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

March—This small townhouse feels homey and romantic. Try confit and grilled duck touched with sweet and savory chutneys or Atlantic salmon with Middle Eastern spices and aïoli. *405 E. 58th St. (754-6272). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Match Uptown—Younger sibling of SoHo's trendy restaurant–lounge–sushi bar, with an equally eclectic menu featuring things like seared sea scallops with chive-oxtail risotto and seared pepper tuna with ginger-roasted pineapple. This branch has a cigar room. *33 E. 60th St. (906-9175). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Mickey Mantle's—A sleek sports bar and restaurant with an art gallery, the requisite TV monitors, and a collection of vintage baseball jerseys. Features American cuisine like hickory-smoked baby back ribs, chicken-fried steak, and grilled swordfish. *42 Central Park So. (688-7777). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Motown Cafe—Motor City music, live and memorialized in showbiz displays, keeps the crowds lining up. So do the down-home midtown ver-

Institution

When Brooklyn Was the World

Gage & Tollner, the restaurant a borough wouldn't let die, is reopening a year after enduring a "friendly foreclosure" by a bank that felt personally involved enough to enlist the help of, possibly, the one man who could save it. "It was really old and run-down," says Joe Chirico, the initially reluctant new owner of the Fulton Mall landmark. "No heat, no air-conditioning." Even former chef Edna Lewis's acclaimed southern cooking couldn't keep the bentwood chairs full. Now, after a half-million-dollar renovation, Gage & Tollner will unlock its revolving door early next month. Chirico arrived in Carroll Gardens 30 years ago from Calabria to open Marco Polo, a Court Street institution in its own red-sauce right. Regular customers from Independence Bank, which had foreclosed on Gage & Tollner, bugged Chirico for months to take over "Brooklyn's Statue of Liberty," ultimately negotiating generous financing for the mortgage. Chirico set about gutting the kitchen and luring chef Marvin James (pictured) from theater-district bistro Chez Josephine to enliven the charmingly basic menu with fancified creations like lobster boudin. Historical verisimilitude will be preserved in part by Wade Sinclair, a former bartender and maître d', who called Chirico as soon as construction began. His tales of the restaurant's illustrious past are a hallmark of how much things have changed since the days when waiters took orders without pen and pad, when you had to have a reservation or you'd never get a table for lunch, when lawyers from the courthouses up the street would take judges out to lunch to discuss cases. Imagine that. (372 Fulton Street; A, C, 2, 3, 4, or 5 train.) Robin Raisfeld

Photograph by Steffen Thalemann.

sions of barbecue, fried chicken, meatloaf, and crab cakes. *104 W. 57th St. (581-8030). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Petrossian—Fast food for the very rich in an Art Deco setting with carved frosted glass, mink-trimmed banquettes, and period bronzes—lean flappers with leaner wolfhounds. *182 W. 58th St. (245-2214). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Rosa Mexicano—Did someone say "fresh-pomegranate margarita"? Yes, someone did. What's more, this spot prepares your guacamole tableside (a south-of-the-border hibachi?). Some of the tastier gourmet Mexican in the city. *1063 First Ave., at 58th St. (753-7407). (M) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

San Domenico—Toques off to owner Tony May, who may have done more for the cause of serious Italian cooking in New York than any other single restaurateur. His dining room is formal, and the food is wonderful. *240 Central Park So. (265-5959). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, East Side

Arizona 206—Innovative southwestern, situated amid a cluster of movie theatres, and spitting distance from Bloomingdale's. Adobelike setting with fireplace and active sort-of-singles bar. Ideal spot for a drink or a feast. *206 E. 60th St. (838-0440). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Baraonda—When the rest of the neighborhood is dark, this elegant Northern Italian hot spot is just starting to glow. The Rangers celebrated their Stanley Cup victory here, and yes, that was George Michael. *1439 Second Ave., at 75th St. (288-8555). (M) ($).*

Cafe Crocodile—A French Mediterranean bistro with dishes ranging from Provençal to Moroccan. An intimate, romantic restaurant in a townhouse crowded with flowers and oil paintings. Serious foodies from the neighborhood and the occasional gaggle of well-informed Euro-tourists. *354 E. 74th St. (249-6619). (M) AE.*

Cafe Nosidam—Italian-American fare, and a people-watchers' paradise. *768 Madison Ave., nr. 66th St. (717-5633). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Cafe Pierre—The next best thing to room service is this warm, intimate dining room. Serving contemporary French cuisine, this is the perfect elegant spot to enjoy good food and discreet conversation. Dinner dancing, starting at nine Thursday through Saturday. *2 E. 61st St., in the Hotel Pierre (940-8185). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

China Fun—Bustling noodle house, with authentic Chinese dim sum, seasonal specials, and weekend brunch. Perfectly situated for post-movie dining. *1239 Second Ave., at 65th St. (752-0810). (I) AE, MC, V.*

El Pollo—This Peruvian chicken joint has stuck with its simple, minimal menu, to the benefit of this otherwise barren neighborhood. Potatoes come four ways, but you can't miss with the incredible curly fries. *1746 First Ave., nr. 90th St. (996-7810). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Elaine's—Primarily a clubhouse for the city's notables and wannabes. A table here is considered a badge of honor by some. While discussing the issues of the day, try American fare for very busy people. *1703 Second Ave., bet. 88th and 89th Sts. (534-8103). (M) AE, DS, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Restaurant & Lounge—A seamless fusion of a steakhouse and an ocean-liner lounge. The dining room's landscape is speckled with round booths so big and luxurious that they seem structural. This place has two gears: As the evening wears on, the young-moms-with-strollers eatery gives way to an East Side hot spot complete with a sushi bar. *1340 First Ave., at 72nd St. (249-3600). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

JoJo—The grilled chicken with chickpea frites is a great dish. But then, Jean-Georges Vongerichten doesn't make many mistakes in this elegant, jewel-like dining room situated on two floors of an East Sixties townhouse. Lunch upstairs, overlooking the street, is especially lovely. *160 E. 64th St. (223-5656). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Le Cirque—In the heady eighties, *haute* fashion, finance, and cuisine collided here. Owner Sirio Maccioni still orchestrates a lively scene, and Sylvain Portay still believes in the magic of foie

cue

What are the new films and where are they playing?
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gras and crème brûlée. *58 E. 65th St. (794-9292). (E) AE, CB, DC.*

Letizia—Upper East Side neighborhood Italian that treats everyone like a local. Try unusual pasta dishes like the half-moon ravioli filled with shrimp and broccoli rabe. *1352 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (517-2244). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Lex—A spot for ladies who lunch, in exactly the right neighborhood. Lots of comfy food like club sandwiches, pot pies, beef stew, and brownies. *133 E. 65th St. (744-2533). (E) AE, MC, V.*

Marti Turkish Restaurant—Kebabs 'R' Us, and the stuffed cabbage is good, too. A dining room that seats 200 people, complete with live music and wandering belly dancers. There is also a "special party room." *1269 First Ave., nr. 68th St. (737-5922). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Nino's—Elegant Italian with a romantic mural garden and nightly live entertainment. Try the grilled dishes—tuna on a bed of balsamic onions, double-cut veal chop—or the lobster fra diavolo. *1354 First Ave., nr. 72nd St. (988-0002). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Park Avenue Cafe—A polished, countrified American café for business lunches and off-duty get-to-know-yous in the evening. Chef David Burke makes the tired catchall "American fare" sing, and keeps the *haute* neighbors rapt with signature dishes like rack of lamb and his swordfish chop. *100 E. 63rd St. (644-1900). (E) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Post House—Clubby and comfortable, this handsome dining room specializes in good quality and big portions. The peppery Cajun-style steak is a favorite, especially with a side order of French fries or onion rings. There are dishes with decidedly less cholesterol—poached salmon, say, or lemon chicken—but this isn't a place to watch your waistline. Seriously. *28 E. 63rd St., in the Lowell Hotel (935-2888). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Toraya—A Japanese teahouse offering an enticing assortment of confections, green teas, and desserts. *17 E. 71st St. (861-1700). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Above 60th Street, West Side

Cafe des Artistes—A smartly run, wonderfully romantic bistro with frolicking nudes on the walls. Open and serving all the time. Stop in before or after a jaunt to Lincoln Center. *1 W. 67th St. (877-3500). (M–E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

China Fun—Oodles of noodles, every which way, plus dim sum and Cantonese barbecue dishes. Try the Shanghai weekend brunch. *246 Columbus Ave., nr. 71st St. (580-1516). (I) AE, MC, V.*

Hi-Life Bar & Grill—Big-city brasserie with retro feel. During the week, the mahogany French doors, an overstuffed banquette, and the oversize goldfish tanks provide a cozy refuge for the neighborhood. Fine food that ranges from steamed dumplings to strawberry sundaes. After dinner every weekend, a D.J. tilts the place toward a party. *477 Amsterdam Ave., at 83rd St. (787-7199). (M) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Hunan Park—A standard Chinese restaurant on the Upper West Side, but when you have the craving, get your fix here. Yes, that was David Letterman. *235 Columbus Ave., nr. 71st St. (724-4411). Also, Hunan Park Two, 721 Columbus Ave., at 95th St. (222-6511). (I) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Londel's—Food cooked soulfully on a blooming strip off Strivers Row. Live music most nights and velvet rope at the front door create an ambience not often associated with home cooking. Try the smothered pork chops, but be forewarned: Everything's cooked to order—*slow*-cooked to order. *2620 Frederick Douglass Blvd., at 140th St. (234-6114). (I–M) CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

M&G Diner—Dropping-off-the-bone short-rib sandwiches at the counter and low-key comfort. Jukebox is worth scanning. *383 W. 125th St. (864-7326). (I) ($).*

Main Street—This lofty dining room with a skylit atrium and general-store décor is a great place for large parties (or hungry couples) dining family-style on enormous platters of meat loaf, terrines of macaroni and cheese, and trays of filet mignon au poivre. Bring an appetite. *446 Columbus Ave., nr. 81st St. (873-5025). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, TM, V.*

Picholine—Chef Terrance Brennan's French-Mediterranean cuisine is as beautiful to look at as it is delicious to eat. Try the risotto, smoky with tender duck and wild mushrooms, and velvety foie gras with peach coulis, and save room for a glass of port to accompany the amazingly rich and well-chosen cheese course. *35 W. 64th St. (724-8585). (E) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Sarabeth's—This New York institution is a homey place for upscale down-home food like chicken potpie and pancakes. It also offers a children's menu and a mouth-watering bakery counter, with homemade, award-winning jams and preserves. *423 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (496-6280). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Sylvia's—A staple of the neighborhood, with a tradition and ambience strong enough to draw loyal customers from uptown and downtown. Live entertainment that truly aids digestion. *328 Lenox Ave., bet. 126th and 127th Sts. (996-0660). (I) ($).*

Tavern on the Green—A must for your country cousin. This mazelike collection of dining rooms, each with a view of the park better than the previous one's, is worth cutting the hansom-cab ride short for. *Central Park at 67th St. (873-3200). (E) AE, CB, DC, DS, MC, V.*

Wells—A talked-about chicken-and-waffle combination. One way or another, this restaurant has been a neighborhood mainstay for nearly 60 years. *2247 Adam Clayton Powell Jr. Blvd., at 132nd St. (234-0700). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Takeout
Neo-Italianate

First came the voguish TriBeCa bistro, then the West Village gourmet shop, and now—Zeitgeist antennae, perhaps, zooming in on the burgeoning Silicon Alley—the Union Square Barocco Kitchen, with all the requisite bars: sandwich, salad, and espresso. (42 Union Square East.)

Photograph by Kenneth Chen.

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John Connolly

continued from page 24

drews—disgusted with the constant infighting—resigned from the board.

In the meantime, then-assistant administrator Barbara Krulick discovered two forged checks. An investigation revealed that Academy controller Kimberly Michael Hawkins had stolen roughly $175,000 through the use of an Academy credit card and countless checks made out to cash. Hawkins, who former coworkers say was a "very disturbed and frightening man" who kept a pet boa constrictor in his office and fed it live rats, should have aroused suspicion earlier.

But Hawkins, as it turns out, was the only person who really understood the day-to-day goings-on at the Academy. He had to have known that—because of the amount of time Smith, Wilkinson, and Pivar spent bickering—nobody was minding the store. "The Academy, which hosts these really neat parties, was being managed as though it were party headquarters and not as an institution of higher learning," says a former staff member. As it stands, the Academy has a $1.7 million mortgage and another $100,000 in bank loans, and in addition to facing Pivar's lawsuit, it's had to contend with one from the Academy's former landlord for $250,000 in back rent and property damage. There's also a $500,000 loan from Wilkinson that's due this year (which, sources say, may be forgiven). In total, its liabilities add up to $2,476,931.

At just about any other institution where such negligence had been uncovered, those in charge would have volunteered to resign. But such a course never occurred to Smith or Wilkinson. "I guess the ultimate responsibility rested with me as chairman," says Smith, as though it were only now occurring to him for the first time, "but I never considered that possibility." Adds Wilkinson, "I only go to the Academy a few times a month. How could I be held responsible?"

And it does seem like things may be getting back on track. Barbara Krulick has been promoted to the position of director. An outsider—curator Bruce Ferguson—has been hired as president. And for now, Smith and Wilkinson are downplaying the Pivar situation. "It is not unusual for the founders of an institution to become upset when that institution grows past one man's vision of how it should function," Smith says, careful to acknowledge the more than $1.2 million Pivar has donated to the Academy over the years. Bring up the lawsuit, however, and Smith says only, "I'm not going to fuck around with a guy like Stuart Pivar." ■

Renaissance

continued from page 40

THE PROBLEM WITH THE NEW RENAISSANCE People is that they are *not* just starting somewhere. They begin fully funded, audience-assured, coverage-guaranteed. Why do we coddle them so? Why do their successes become our own? The aristocracy used to set the standard in matters of taste, but now we respond to the new RPs as if they were born and bred to lead.

And there is something Medici-like about the excesses of the new vanity projects—their sheer cost, number, and ubiquity. Previous rashes of dilettantism were quirkier, more pleasingly eccentric. They involved theories, manifestos, modi vivendi. Sir Isaac Newton was able to deftly transition, as they say now, from inventing calculus and discovering the laws of gravitation to studying alchemy, all without the help of Peggy Siegal. Charles Dodgson, world-class mathematician and author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,* found a fruitful sideline as a photographer, unfortunately mostly of unclothed young girls. Many of America's dilettantes of yore were really compulsive tinkerers: Benjamin Franklin and the wood-burning stove, Thomas Edison and the lightbulb, Desi Arnaz and the three-camera sitcom. There is also an Anglophile line—dandified, aristocratic—ending with Plimpton, that follows in the footsteps of Malcolm Muggeridge (novelist, editor, spy, TV personality) and Alistair Cooke (journalist, cultural critic, urbane host of *Masterpiece Theater).*

Today we have Madonna, tinkering with her body, her career, her record label, her plan for global domination. She is a dilettante in name only, because the sense of a master plan is palpable. It's not that the idea of starring in a film occurred to her post-fame; she's always known where she wanted to be. Following Barbra Streisand, who may have served as a model for image and career control, she's modernized the diva. She has never been ridiculous, or not for long, anyway, though she has been overexposed. After *Speed-the-Plow,* she went back to videos. After *Sex,* she went back to singing songs. She had a brief flirtation with the Courtney Love look on the cover of *Details,* before more sensibly settling on Gucci glamour.

Like a true empiricist, Madonna returns to the source every time she fails, releasing another couple of No. 1 singles, then resuming her quest to rule the world. Alanis Morrisette turned Madonna's vanity Time Warner label into a viable alternative outlet; *Evita,* should it be successful, could at last offer her an exit out of the pop life. Madonna fits all the criteria, is under 40, is recognized around the world, and is very, very smart. The rest of us might as well give up now. ■

Cucina—A labor of love. Northern Italian in an elegant and very well appointed room. Sensational antipasti. *256 Fifth Ave., nr. Garfield Pl. (718-230-0711). (M) ($).*

Gargiulo's—On its own block, with a fortress to fend off the encroaching pathos of Coney Island. Great food and service passed down through the family. The 100-foot Styrofoam octopus is gone, a casualty of the recent renovation. When pressed, Louis Russo will tell you he cooked it. *2911 W. 15th St., nr. Surf Ave. (718-266-4891). (I) AE, DC, MC, V.*

Lundy Bros.—A restored Brooklyn landmark serving a wide-ranging menu of fish, pasta, chicken, and steak but specializing in fresh seafood. Don't miss the raw bar or the reconstructed shore dinner. *1901 Emmons Ave. (718-743-0022). (M) AE, MC, TM, V.*

Peter Luger's—Steak for one, steak for two, steak for four, and creamed spinach. Apply for your own house credit card, or bring cash. *178 Broadway, at Bedford Ave. (718-387-7400). (E) ($).*

The River Cafe—It's always worth crossing the bridge to sit waterside, enchanted by the skyline and a celebration of contemporary American cooking that predates the throng. Outdoor seating in season. *1 Water St. (718-522-5200). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, V.*

Two Tom's—Firehouse-kitchen ambience and a waiter who tells you what you want to eat. The double-rib pork chops are peerless, and the escarole is great, too, but refuse the mercilessly overcooked pasta when it's offered. Eat early during the week and call ahead on weekends. Regular private parties make getting a table frustrating, but it's always worth the trouble. *255 Third Ave., nr. Union St. (718-875-8689). (I) ($).*

Queens

Elias Corner—Mix with the locals in Astoria as they queue up for a table at this Greek fish tavern. Don't wait for a menu; it won't come. Instead, eyeball the counter as you enter. If the offerings look like today's catch, they are. The owner fetches the fish each morning. Opt for the deep-fried, pinky-size bait fish over the squid. *24–01 31st St., at Astoria Blvd. (718-932-1510). (M) ($).*

Ralph's Italian Restaurant—Solid, hearty Italian food in a conventional restaurant setting. Dine under the chandeliers and try the osso buco, one of Ralph's specialties. *75–61 31st Ave., Jackson Heights (718-899-2555). (I) AE, DC, TM, V.*

Stick to Your Ribs—Deservedly heralded as New York's best barbecue, this cozy Queens joint draws fans from much further than across the East River. The barbecued Texas beef is sublime. *5-16 51st Ave., Long Island City (718-937-3030). Also, 433 Amsterdam Ave., nr. 80th St. (501-7897). (I) ($).*

Water's Edge—East River views floor-to-ceiling windows; every table has a view of Manhattan. Quiet and elegant. *44th Dr. at the East River (718-482-0033). (E) AE, CB, DC, MC, TM, V.*

Bronx

Cafe Sevilla—A cozy Spanish restaurant that people travel to from as far away as Yonkers. Try the chicken and rice and the seafood gumbo accompanied by sweet and garlicky plantains. *1209 White Plains Rd., nr. Westchester Ave. (718-792-3367). (M) AE, MC, V.*

Harry's Jerk Center and Restaurant—An authentic island experience; not that polished resort ambience, the dirt-road-in-the-hills thing. *296 E. Gun Hill Rd., at Burke and Wilson Aves. (718-798-4966). (I) ($).*

Staten Island

Aesop's Tables—Arrive by ferry or bridge to this charming bistro and garden that serves inventive, bold Mediterranean fare with an emphasis on handpicked fresh seafood. *1233 Bay St., Rosebank (718-720-2005). (M) AE, DC, DS, MC, V.*

the mix

Opening Day...*Hey, Joe*...On a Jag

John Leonard's Television Notes

Kindred: The Embraced (4/2; 8 to 9:30 P.M.; Fox) launches Aaron Spelling's glossy new San Francisco vampire series, a sort of Renaissance–Gothic–De Palma with canines. Before police detective Frank Kohanek (C. Thomas Howell) can sort out the various bloodsucking clans—the Toreadors are artistic; the Ventures, aristocratic; the Brujah, Mafia; the Nosferatu, subterranean; and the Gangrels, bikers—everybody's killing everybody else, with TV antennae or whatever, and not even maximum leader Julian Luna (Mark Frankel) seems to be able to put a lid on it. There's also a nice little lip-smacking scene in the pilot, after a ladies'-room snack.

Bloodhounds (4/3; 9 to 11 P.M.; USA) is a chase movie that rubs Corbin Bernsen (*L.A. Law*) and Christine Harnos (*ER*) the wrong way, so there's lots of friction as the aging author of true-crime best-sellers and the smashing Albuquerque police detective–martial artist go south of the border after death-row escapee Kirk Baltz, who not only killed Christine's father but also overacts like Al Pacino. Almost as many dead bodies as *Kindred*, but lots more fun.

Rodgers & Hammerstein: The Sound of Movies (4/7; 8 to 10 P.M.; A&E), emceed by the one and only Shirley Jones, is an Easter Parade of lollipops and balloons—snatches from seven musicals, screen tests (all those kids rejected as von Trapps), Oscar-acceptance speeches (Yul Brynner), vocal demos and wardrobe tests (for Frank Sinatra singing "If I Loved You" before he turned down the part in *Carousel*), and the usual embarrassing outtakes.

Moses (4/7 and 4/8; 8 to 10 P.M.; TNT) brings back Ben Kingsley for another biblical brouhaha, this time as the tough-love patriarch. Last time, he was luckless as Potiphar in *Joseph*. Director Roger Young is still stuck in Morocco. Although David Suchet is a reasonably interesting Aaron, Frank Langella doesn't seem to care much about Mernefta. Having practiced being grandiose for umpteen years, Christopher Lee is a proper Pharaoh. Early on, in a kinky wig, Kingsley will remind you of Gene Wilder, which never happened with Charlton Heston or Burt Lancaster. Late in the game, the Red Sea will be parted not of course by God but by computerized special effects.

To Sir With Love II (4/7; 9 to 11 P.M.; CBS) would seem to be a bad idea that turned into a pretty good TV movie. Sidney Poitier retires, after 30 years of teaching in London. But instead of going home to Guyana, he goes to Chicago and an inner-city school where Daniel J. Travanti is the harassed principal. Poitier thus leaves one of his old movies, the original *To Sir*, to revisit another, *Blackboard Jungle*, in which Sidney himself was the problem child. As always, Poitier succeeds, in spite of drug dealers, metal detectors, gang-bangers, and a betrayal of trust. Somehow, scriptwriter Phillip Rosenberg and director Peter Bogdanovich manage to make characters created by E. R. Braithwaite in the sixties work just as well in the nineties. That "somehow" is doubtless Sidney, who makes us feel better about kids, schools, races, and ourselves.

Bramwell (4/7, 4/14, 4/21, and 4/28; 9 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13) is the latest "Masterpiece Theatre" mini-series about which we are enjoined in a stuffy press release to mention that Mobil is part of the trade name, like *Sidney Sheldon's Windmills of the Gods*. Lucy Gannon wrote and David Tucker and Laura Sims direct this engrossing serial about a female surgeon in late-nineteenth-century London who, with the graciously acknowledged assistance of her indulgent doctor-father, fights off the old-boy Mobil hospital network and saves some ovaries from some Mobil butchers. We've been here before on "Masterpiece Theatre" before Mobil bought part of the name, especially in a wonderful account of the Pankhursts. But Jemma Redgrave as our heroine is an astonishment. Yes, the next generation of those Redgraves, after Mobil Michael and Mobil Vanessa.

Chandler & Co. (4/11, 4/18, 4/25, and 5/2; 9 to 10 P.M.; Channel 13), about a pair of amateur female detectives, is rather too lighthearted for my taste, even for a Mobil "Mystery!," but Barbara Flynn is one of those detectives, and to her I am devoted, in spite of her barrister husband of eighteen years, who thinks she's merely cute. I find her gratifyingly Mobil.

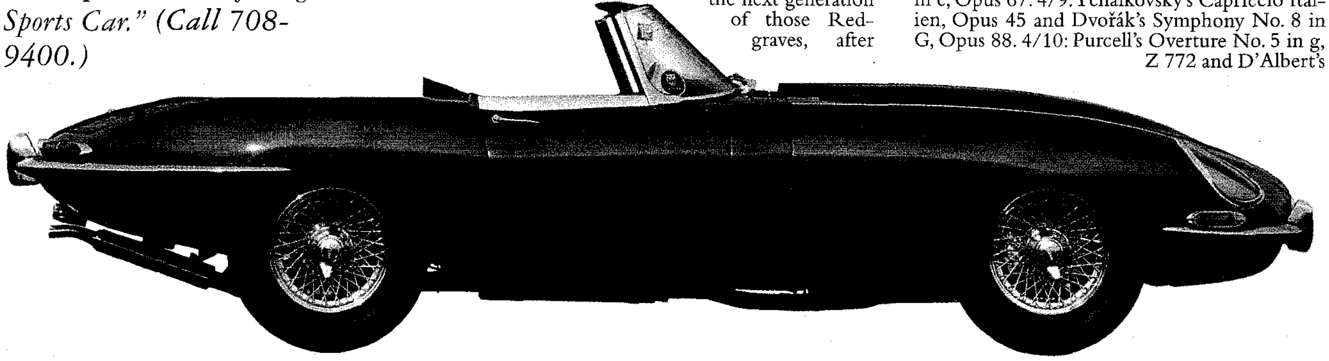
Homecoming (4/14; 8 to 10 P.M.; Showtime) is based—praise God—on Cynthia Voigt's Newbery Medal–winning novel for children, not the nasty Harold Pinter play. So Liza Tillerman (Anna Louise Richardson) deserts all four of her children in a shopping mall, after which they hike to Bridgeport, Connecticut, where Bonnie Bedelia, cast against type as a spinster cousin, is just not up to handling them; and thus to New Haven, where a Yalie is sweet; and finally to Maryland, where Anne Bancroft is their extremely antisocial grandmother until all that cooking and eating fattens everybody's heart. The kids, especially Kimberlee Peterson as Dicey, are quite good. And Bancroft of course is splendid.

All She Ever Wanted (4/14; 9 to 11 P.M.; ABC) requires of Marcia Cross, from *Melrose Place*, that she undergo nightmare mood swings, break things, bite people, rip feeding tubes out of her arms, and cry a lot while bringing to term the baby she insists on having in spite of her bipolar disorder, which used to be called manic-depression, which is medicated with lithium, which she can't have if she's pregnant and hopes for a normal nonaddicted child. James Marshall is her basically supportive, though sometimes terrified husband, Leila Kenzle her best friend, and CCH Pounder her worried doctor in what is a surprisingly absorbing TV movie, given the fact that we have to wonder if there is something dangerously irrational about ordaining a baby no matter the cost to everyone around you.

Previews

Autoerotica

"Because of the E-type's beauty and sculptural quality, its functionality, and its seminal impact on overall car design, it perfectly suits the criteria of a landmark design object," explains MoMA curator Terence Riley. In other words, what even institutional highbrows want is...a sports car. MoMA's proud new acquisition, a 1963 opalescent dark blue Jaguar E-type Roadster, goes on view April 4 in "Refining the Sports Car." (Call 708-9400.)



Photograph courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art.

Radio Highlights

Symphony Hall—4/2: Verdi's *Masnadieri* and Sibelius's Symphony No. 2 in D. 4/3: Mozart's Symphony No. 31 in D, K. 297, *Paris*, and Scriabin's Piano Concerto, Opus 20. 4/4: Berlioz's Roman Carnival Overture, Opus 9, and Dvořák's Symphony No.7 in d, Opus 70. 4/5: Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*: Prelude and Libestod and Mozart's Symphony No. 39 in E flat, K. 543. 4/8: Vaughan Williams's *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* and Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 in c, Opus 67. 4/9: Tchaikovsky's Capriccio Italien, Opus 45 and Dvořák's Symphony No. 8 in G, Opus 88. 4/10: Purcell's Overture No. 5 in g, Z 772 and D'Albert's

Piano Concerto No. 1 in b, Opus 2. Weeknights at 8. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Casper Citron—4/6 at 10 PM: Medical writer Carol Ann Rinzler discusses her new book, *Estrogen and Breast Cancer: A Warning to Women;* Georgia and William Delano, Quaker workers, discuss American Friends Service Committee, the Nobel Peace Prize–winning organization, and other achievements by U.S. Quakers. WOR, 710 AM.

Texaco–Metropolitan Opera—4/6 at 1:30: Glass's *The Voyage*. With Patricia Schulman, Sally Burgess, Philip Creech, and Timothy Noble. Dennis Russell Davies conducts. WQXR, 96.3 FM.

Sunday Night Opera House—4/7 at 8: Wagner's *Parsifal*. With Plácido Domingo, Jessye Norman, James Morris, Kurt Moll, Jan-Hendrik Rootering, Ekkehard Wlaschila and the Metropolitan Opera Chorus. James Levine conducts.

New York and Company—Weekdays at noon on WNYC, 820 AM.

The Written Word

Louis Gluck and Robert Pinsky—4/1 at 8: Reading at the 92nd St. Y, at Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $12.

Martin Amis—4/3 at 8: Reading from *The Information*. Barnes & Noble, 2289 Broadway, at 82nd St. (362-8835); free.

All-Night Reading of Dante's *Inferno* to Commence Good Friday—4/4 at 10: Robert Pinsky and other New York figures join in reading of the *Inferno* at the exact time that Dante envisioned his descent into hell, on the eve of Good Friday. The Cathedral of St. John the Divine, The Poet's Corner, 112th St. and Amsterdam Ave. (316-7540); free.

Anne Beattie and Michael Ondaatje—4/8 at 8: Reading at the 92nd St. Y, at Lexington Ave. (996-1100); $12.

Honor Moore—4/9 at 4: Taking part in the "Speaking of Women" series, Moore discusses her new biography *The White Blackbird: A Life of the Painter Margaret Sargent* by her granddaughter. Ella Weed Room, Milbank Hall, Barnard College at 117th St. and Broadway. (854-2067); free.

Lucille Clifton—4/11 at 7: Reading from her work at D'Agostino Hall, 108 W. 3rd St; free.

Graham Swift—4/12 at 7:30: Reading from *Last Orders* at Shakespeare & Co., 2259 Broadway, at 81st St. (580-7800; free.

Ben Neihart—4/16 at 7:30: Reading from *Hey, Joe* at Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Place; free.

Lectures and Panels

Poetry in the Twenty-First Century: Slams or Readings?—4/2 at 7:30: Where is New York's poetry scene headed? Audience members will get a glimpse of two very different forums for poets—the traditional reading and the late-twentieth-century innovation, the slam. Poets include Tish Benson, Evert Eden, Anne Elliott and Larissa Shmailo. The evening is hosted by Bobby Miller. The New-York Historical Society, 2 W. 77th St., at Central Park W. (873-3400); $6, or free with museum membership.

The President's Forum: an Evening with Vikram Seth—4/2 at 7: Asia Society president Nicholas Platt talks with acclaimed novelist and poet Vikram Seth about his work including the award-winning *A Suitable Boy, The Golden Gate,* and *From Heaven Lake.* Only New York appearance. The Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-6397); $18 nonmembers; $15 members.

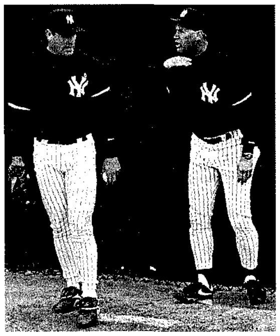
Enamels of Limoges—4/3 at 12:30 P.M.: Lecturer Marvin D. Schwartz presents this talk as part of the Metropolitan Museum's "Let's Talk Art" series. New York Public Library's Donnell Library Center, 20 W. 53rd St.; free.

On Labor and Authorship—4/9 at 7: The new digital media give rise to complex questions about the relationships between artists and workers, much as the emergent film industry once required writers, directors, and technicians to rethink the division of labor inherited from the theater. Panelists Brian Boigon, Liz Diller, Donald Golodtner join moderator Douglas Cooper at the New school. Tishman Auditorium, 66 W. 12th St. (229-5353); $8, students (with I.D.) $5.

Facing the Other: The Fiction of Abe—4/9 at 6:30: One of Japan's most important postwar writes, Kobo Abe (1924–1993) is best known outside of Japan for his novels, including *The Woman in the Dunes, Face of Another,* and *The Ruined Map*. Columbia University professor of Japanese Literature, Paul Anderer, will discuss Abe's engagement with the native and the strange, as well as his painstaking examination of emptiness, loss and the need of the imagination for new structures. The Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015); Members $8, nonmembers $10.

Comeback (Don't) Look Back in Anger

Mel Stottlemyre (pictured, right) is positively giddy. On the phone from the Yankees' spring-training complex in Tampa last week, the new pitching coach can barely refrain from giggling when describing his "wonderful dilemma": choosing a five-man pitching rotation from a group that he says may, top to bottom, be the best he has ever coached. Stottlemyre's time in Yankee pinstripes wasn't always marked by such joy. In spring 1975, the team reneged on an oral agreement and released Stottlemyre, the sixth-winningest pitcher in Yankee history, who was recovering from an injury suffered the previous year. He blamed owner George Steinbrenner and wouldn't speak to him for more than twenty years. In the aftermath, he went on to a high-profile career as pitching coach for the Mets's dominant pitching staffs during the mid- to late eighties. This past fall, Steinbrenner called to make amends and offered him a job; Stottlemyre was finally ready to let go of the old resentment. And although the owner made Stottlemyre "feel good about returning to New York," the once and future Yankee knows after two decades of playing and surviving in media central, there's nothing so cut-and-dried as a "happy ending" in this town. "If something happens where this doesn't work out, I won't have a problem with it," he said at the press conference announcing his hiring. In the meantime, Mel Stottlemyre just laughs. *(At Cleveland, Monday, April 1, at 1 p.m.)*



JOHN DIOSO

Tours

Walking Tour of Radical New York History and Architecture—4/6 at 2:30: The tour visits "many points of freedom and destiny" in Greenwich Village, the East Village, and NoHo; the Triangle Shirtwaist fire; the only New York building by Louis Sullivan; the Bloomerite hangout of the 1850s; and the Astor Place riots, among others. Starts at the Peace Building, 339 Lafayette St., at Bleecker St. (718-262-0948); voluntary contribution according to one's means is requested.

Ye Olde Tavern Tour—A tour of some of the most historic bars and taverns in Greenwich Village. Call 517-0201 for meeting place and information on this and other Sidewalks of New York tours; $12.

Annual Holy Catholic Tour—4/6 at 1: A special Easter Weekend walking tour of Lower Manhattan tracing the roots and growth of New York City's largest religious denomination. Stops include St. Peter's Transfiguration, and St. James Churches as well as places of American saints and Catholic hangings. Call 439-1090 for meeting site and further information. $9, $7 students and seniors.

Lower East Side I—Radical Jews—4/6 at 1: The Henry Street Settlement, The Rosenbergs and Knickerbocker Village, Abraham Cahan and the *Jewish Daily Forward,* Rose Pastor Stokes, the Anti-Inflation Riots, Sidney Hillman, the Education Alliance, and more. Meet across the street from the old *Daily Forward* building, 175 East Broadway. (718-492-0069); $6.

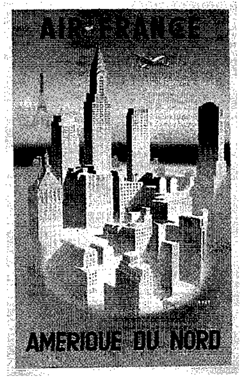
Beatles/Marilyn Monroe/Movie Sites—4/6. Three separate tours of the haunts and homes of the Beatles, John Lennon, Marilyn Monroe, and famous NYC movie sites. Call 465-3331 for times and meeting places. $12.

Annual Easter Sunday Jewish Ellis Island—4/7 at noon: A guided tour of the Ellis Island museum and the grounds with a special emphasis on the Jewish immigrant experience, including a talk on the history of American immigration. Call Big Onion Walking Tours at 439-1090 for meeting site and further information. $15, $13 students and seniors.

A Tribute to Jackie—If you can't make the Sotheby's auction, here's a two-hour stroll through Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's neighborhood, past the places she loved and frequented. Meeting place: Fifth Ave. at 91st St., in front of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum. (call 662-5300 for schedule information). $12.

Events

New Farmers Market—4/6 from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M.: On this and every Saturday following its opening, the 26th Street Antiques Annex will now also host a farmers' market. More than 65 dealers will sell a wide range of fresh fruit, vegetables and baked goods; all the vendors either grow or bake what they sell themselves. 24th Street and Sixth Avenue.



Shopping

Along with its usual abundance of (for-sale) advertising broadsides, this spring's International Vintage Poster Fair will feature an exhibition of New York Film Festival promotional bills by such artists as Roy Litchtenstein, Andy Warhol, and Robert Motherwell, and a series of free seminars on collecting. (Call 206-0499.)

Photograph: bottom, AP/Wide World Photos.

Sports

Armed and Dangerous—Who are these guys? Rather, wha'happened? Throw out last year's stat sheet because it probably doesn't apply to this year's team anyway. The returning starters are Wade Boggs at third, Bernie Williams in center, Paul O'Neill in right, and, if you want to count DHs, Ruben Sierra. That's it. Not that there's anything wrong with it. The Yankees have perhaps the AL's best pitching, with nary a weak spot (other than the possibility they may go into the season without a lefty reliever). And they'll probably sacrifice a surplus starter (Kamieniecki? Melido Perez?) for a middle infielder now that Pat Kelly and Tony Fernandez are hurt. (I guess you *can* have too much pitching.) Donnie replacement Tino Martinez should give the Yanks more punch at bat; in the field, well, he'll give them more punch at bat. Joe Girardi—*Joe Girardi!*—has been unfairly singled out as the symbol of the Watson-Torre regime's wrongheadedness. Fortunately, for Joe G., he has batted above .400 this spring, and he'll probably have to do that in the regular season to keep the boobirds at bay. The Yanks open the season at Cleveland Mon., 4/1, at 1:05; Wed., 4/3, at 7:05; Thurs., 4/4, at 1:05. At Texas, Fri., 4/5, at 8:35; Sat., 4/6, at 8:35; Sun., 4/7, at 8:05.

Frankie Goes to Flushing—With Bill Pulsipher on the DL to open the season, the three-headed monster known as Isringhausen-Pulsipher-Wilson (Seaver-Koosman-Matlack Mk 2) will have to wait a while. Even without Pulse and Pete Harnisch, who despite his kicking and screaming will also be left behind in Port St. Lucie for a couple of weeks on the DL, the Mets have Bobby Jones, Juan Acevedo, and Dave Mlicki (I guess you *can't* have too much pitching, huh). The wild card this spring in the Mets' camp has been Butch Huskey, once pegged as an underachieving Hensley Meulens–ish slugger without a position, now Frank Thomas redux! The Mets open at home vs. St. Louis Mon., 4/1, at 1:40; Wed., 4/3, at 1:40; Thurs., 4/4, at 1:40. Vs. Pittsburgh, Fri., 4/5, at 7:40; Sat., 4/6, at 1:40; Sun., 4/7, at 1:40.

Knicks—Tues., 4/2, at Indiana at 7:30. Wed., 4/3, vs. Orlando. Fri., 4/5, at Milwaukee. Sat., 4/6, at Toronto.

Nets—Wed., 4/3, vs. Clippers. Sat., 4/6, vs. Milwaukee.

Next-to-Last Call—Coaches hate this kind of week: No matter how much Colin Campbell or anyone else talks about heading into the playoffs sharp, his team's edge honed by a series of tough games, every coach who ever held chalk would rather ease in to the playoffs with a big cushion in the standings and the luxury of resting their stars. But what coaches hate, fans often love, and this week's old-fashioned home-and-home Rangers tension should be heightened by Mike Richter trying to play his way into shape at the most crucial time of year. Rangers vs. Devils, 4/2, at 7:30; at Philadelphia, 4/4, at 7:30; vs. Philadelphia, 4/5, at 7:30; at Devils, 4/7, at 3. Steve Sullivan probably hasn't played enough games to be a serious contender for rookie of the year, but the pocket-size center (listed at five feet nine—yeah, right) should get some kind of award for pumping up the Devils' offense. Devils at Rangers, 4/2, at 7:30; vs. Hartford, 4/4, at 7:30; at Hartford, 4/6, at 1:30; vs. Rangers, 4/7, at 3. Islanders vs. Philadelphia, 4/2, at 7:30; at Ottawa, 4/5, at 7:30; vs. Buffalo, 4/6, at 7.

Online

Kathhryn Crosby—The wife of the late Bing Crosby returns to Broadway in *State Fair* this month. Chat with her about the production and what she has been up to for the past few years. On America Online: 4/1 at 8 P.M.

Jason Isringhausen—Major League Baseball, in conjunction with iGuide, will host a chat with New York Mets pitcher Isringhausen live from Baseball's Opening Day party in New York City on 4/2 at 5 P.M. *http://www.majorleaguebaseball.com*

Playwright Ntozake Shange—Join her in a discussion about the new South African musical, *Nomathemba*. On CompuServe: 4/2 at 10 P.M.

As the World Turns . . . 40—The stars of the daytime soap will celebrate their show's fortieth anniversary by chatting on Prodigy from their party at the Supper Club in New York: 4/2 at 8:30 P.M.

Last-Minute Tax Help—General tax chat sponsored by the Accounting Office will try to answer some of those last minute questions that your tax software doesn't cover. On MSN: 4/3 at 9 P.M.

Chuck D.—Chat with one of the all-time stars of hip-hop and founding member of Public Enemy. On Prodigy, *jump* SonicNet: 4/4 at 7 P.M.

Online Love—Richard Booth, author of *Romancing the Net* and self-proclaimed expert on computer romance, will discuss the emotional repercussions of getting involved in an online relationship. Booth has promised to support his theories with a few "shocking" case studies of online courtships. On Prodigy: 4/4 at 10 P.M.

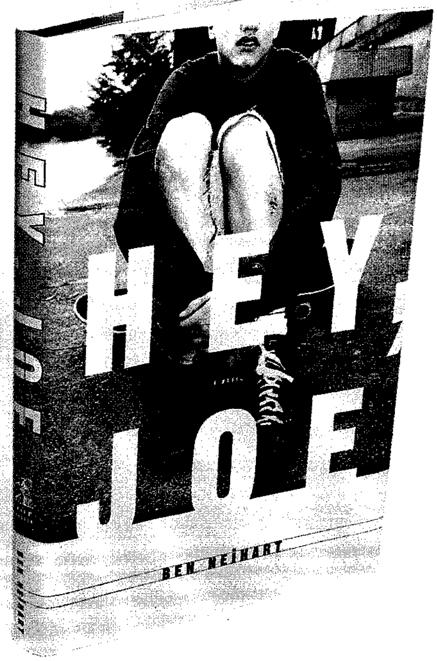
Quark From *Deep Space Nine*—The *Star Trek* Club presents the actor who plays the barkeep from *DS9*, Armin Shimerman. He's the one with the getup that makes him like like a bald cat with a oversized nose. On America Online: 4/6 at 11 P.M.

Interactive Seder—Led by Rabbi Arnold D. Samlan of the Jewish National Fund, this virtual Seder will be a shorter version of the traditional Passover ceremony and will include explanations of the customs for the uninitiated. On America Online, *keyword* Jewish: 4/8 at 10 P.M.

Loni Anderson—Get the low-down on her new stint as a guest star on Fox's *Melrose Place* beginning this month. On Prodigy: 4/8 at 10 P.M.

Collette Avital—Israel's consul-general for New York, discusses the state of the Middle East peace process in the *New York* Magazine forum. On CompuServe, *go* NYTALK: 4/2 at 9 P.M.

Conferences last about one hour. Send suggestions to runnette@emedia.net



In Print
Extraordinary Joe

'Hey, Joe,' Ben Neihart's exuberant first novel, traces a gay 16-year-old's life in New Orleans; Neihart reads from it at the Astor Place Barnes & Noble on April 16 (see listings).

Photograph by Wayne Simpson.

Walter Kirn

continued from page 58

of course, he incarnated the foul-smelling sprawl of a lion snarling over the meat between his paws." It's as if, in the whirl of going places, Vollmann has lost his ear for spoken English and substituted echoes of old, bad books. "It was only latterly that his urgency had begun to sense the low brain-colored island of Japan coming closer . . ."

The Atlas is dense with bushy symbolist thickets. In the long title story, an endless train ride occasions a dizzying welter of reflections on life and love and traveling itself, overlaying so many scenes and faces that reading it is like death by verbal drowning. A section called "The Red Song," set in Mexico City, goes so cornily awry you hope that it's a put-on: "On a gasoline smelling night of blue walls, the peacock shadows of her dress, men crawled after her like worms. Bars of darkness, tiger-darkness, and tiger-light walled widely shadowed concrete into the nowhere, where she became an icon imprisoned in gold." This mash of symbolism can't be waded through: You have to pole-vault over it somehow. But most embarrassing is the stilted porno tone that creeps into some of the lovemaking scenes, as when a woman's genitals are called "her delicious musk mound."

Vollmann's lyricism is impenetrable, an attempt to liken everything to everything that ends up saying virtually nothing. His occasional forays into abstraction and intellectualism are just as strained. Of a desolate northern island, he writes: "It was a blank page of possibilities, not excluding loveliness and terror. Absolute potentiality was a very wearisome thing to any imperfect being (such as myself) which crawled across the gravel flats." *Stream of consciousness* is not the term; this is heap of consciousness.

What's strange is the urge one feels to overlook this stuff, to gaze away when the guide himself seems lost. Vollmann is nothing if not sincere—achingly so—and his drivenness is winning. The enormity of his project makes you root for him. In a section dealing with San Francisco prostitutes, "The Best Way to Smoke Crack," he comes down to earth and gets out of his own way. His senses work best in the lower depths, it seems: "There were two roaches on the wall, and she got the both with her shoe in a slamming blow like the one three months ago that had left her permanently blind in her right eye when she was being raped; now she couldn't read a menu anymore." Vollmann the reporter draws maps of hell that show us just how to get there, and what it's like. Vollmann dreaming strands us in a labyrinth. ■

kids

Eggs...Chicks...Rabbit Ears

Ground Rules:

- ● = free
- ● = now or never (one-shot deal or final week)

Children's Events

Easter in Central Park—Every child who attends the **Fiftieth Annual Central Park Eggstravaganza** will get a free Easter basket filled with candy, a souvenir flower, and a wooden egg. Local entertainers will be out in full force, among them the casts of *Beauty and the Beast* and *State Fair,* singing songs from their respective shows (from about 11:30 to 12:30); the Rockettes lead the longest bunny hop in the world (at about 12:45); and class-act children's troubadour Tom Chapin performs (at about 1:15). Unicyclists and clowns from Big Apple Circus, jugglers, storytellers, puppeteers, and mimes roam the bandshell area. Noncompetitive egg hunts and egg rolls are organized every ten or fifteen minutes. Kids can also dye eggs, make bonnets and tissue flowers, and pet bunnies and goats. The event, which promises to be the biggest ever in Central Park, is sponsored by Met Food, Nestlé, and Mix 105, who will endeavor not to run out of candy, ice cream, bananas, soda, and juice. Just in case, though, arrive in a timely fashion. Winners of the Hunt for the Golden Egg Sweepstakes win tickets to Broadway shows; the grand prize is a weeklong trip for four to Disneyworld. 4/6 from 11 to 2. Naumberg Bandshell, **Central Park.** Enter park at 72nd St. and Fifth Ave. (360-3456); see essay. ●●

Screening Benefit—Next week the **Hollywood for Children Family Film Festival,** to benefit the Audrey Hepburn Hollywood for Children Foundation, has all manner of cinematic events around town—screenings of three new children's movies, *James and the Giant Peach, Vytor, The Starfire Champion,* and *The Road Home;* film classes for children at the New York Film Academy; Russian animation; child-celebrity-actor appearances, and stand-up comedy for kids (on film). Sony Imax Theater, at 68th and Broadway and other locations around the city. 4/8 to 4/13. Ticket prices range from $30 for a child and $55 for an adult—good for five morning screenings, a poster, a T-shirt, and other goodies—up to $350 for a child and $500 for an adult. For more information and a complete schedule of events, call 800-543-7818.

Bright Lights, Big Top—This year's **Ringling Bros. and Barnum and Bailey's Greatest Show on Earth** is especially strong on visual drama—elephants in glittery outfits, Roman soldiers, lions, tigers, hanging from the hair, and major tightrope action. Children may not want to sit down throughout—or close their mouths. **Madison Square Garden,** Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (307-7171), through 4/28; $10 to $35.

Big Kids' Theater—Occasionally a member of the **Freestyle Repertory Theatre** takes a slave, or a wife, or maybe even a dog from out of the audience. Always it takes ideas and weaves them into extraordinarily well conceived musicals, right before your eyes. Bring your best song titles and script ideas. Not specifically intended for family audiences, the show is suitable for older kids nonetheless. Call for schedule. **John Houseman Studio Theatre,** 450 W. 42nd St. (642-8202); $15. *Bring in 'Da Noise, Bring in 'Da Funk* is an infectiously energetic tap starring choreographer and tap phenomenon Savion Glover. The show recently moved to Broadway after a critically acclaimed run at the Joseph Papp Public Theater. Performances begin 4/9. **The Ambassador Theatre**, 219 W. 49th St. (239-6200); $20 for day-of performance rush seats. Other tickets are $50 to $67.50.

Shows for Little Kids—The traditional Arabian version of *Aladdin and His Magic Lamp* is performed weekends through 6/9 at 1:30; a decidedly nontraditional version of *The Three Little Pigs,* in which a wolf disguised as Donald Trump convinces Old McDonald to sell the farm, little pigs and all, is performed weekends at 3. **Grove Street Playhouse,** 39 Grove St. (741-6436); $7. J. P. Jarrett, billed as a "singer illusionist," gets the audience to help make ghosts float and bunnies appear out of nowhere in a show called *Altered Reality.* Sundays at 12:30 and 3 through 5/26. **Theatre East,** 211 E. 60th St. (838-8528); $12. A musical version of Cinderella is performed with rod and hand puppets by the **Papageno Puppet Theater** Sats. at noon, through 4/27, at the Brownstone School, 128 W. 80th St. (874-3297). Reservations required; $6, free to children under 2. *Schoolhouse Rock Live!* is at the **Lamb's Theatre** Wed. and Thurs. at 8, Fri. and Sat. at 8 and 10, Sun. at 3; 130 W. 44th St. (239-6200); $20 to $25.

High Kicking—In **New Radio City Spring Spectacular,** a troupe of mixed-breed dogs—rescued from shelters—performs canine tricks even better than your dog can. Not to be outdone, the Rockettes dance their way through to a final kick line of 50 rabbits. 4/6 through 4/21. 1260 Ave. of the Americas (247-4777); $25 to $41.

The Dirt—Spring activities at the **New York Botanic Garden** for children include opportunities to feed earthworms, make compost, and look through a microscope at pond life. Weekends, Wednesday afternoons and Monday holidays through October, 1 to 4. 200th St and Southern Blvd in the Bronx (718-817-8700). General admission is $3, $1 for seniors, students and children ages 6 to 16.

Peter Rabbit—Peter Rabbit attends an afternoon celebration of Beatrix Potter stories for children of all ages. 4/6 from 3 to 6. **The Pierpont Morgan Library,** 29 E. 36th St. (685-0008). Suggested contribution $5, $3 for students and seniors.●

Zoo Story—"Spring Break-Out," a long-standing **Bronx Zoo** rite of spring—when many of the animals come out of their indoor winter habitats—is an excuse for a full week of live music, egg decorating, performances, and workshops for kids. 4/6 to 4/14 from 11:30 to 4:30. Bronx River Parkway at Fordham Rd., Bronx (718-367-1010). General admission is $6.75 for adults, $3 for children and seniors, free to all on Wednesdays.

Cue

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Barbara Ensor
Kids

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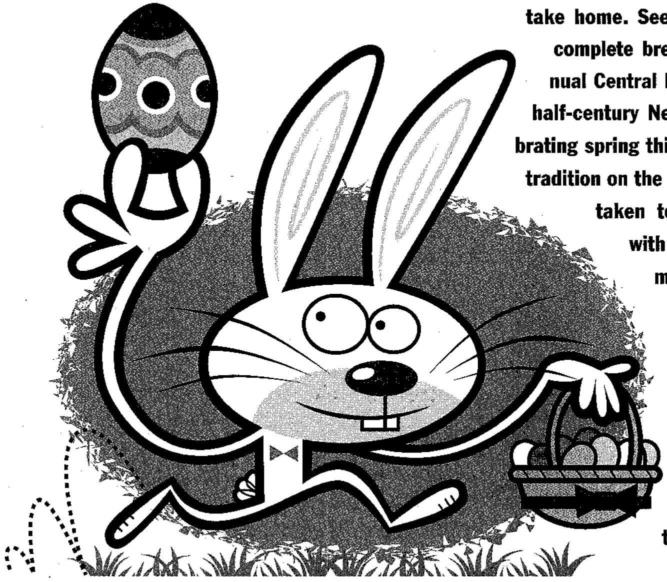
Scrambled Eggs

Ten thousand New Yorkers, many of them children, are expected to show up in Central Park this Saturday to fervently set about mixing the wild brew of rabbit-egg and bonnet metaphors that make up the modern Easter rite of spring. Expect egg-rolling, hat-juggling, egg-dying, rabbit-handshaking, candy-guzzling, bonnet-making, egg-hunting, mutual hat admiration, and a basket stuffed with candy and a commemorative wooden egg to take home. See "Children's Events" for a complete breakdown on the Fiftieth Annual Central Park Eggstravaganza. In the half-century New Yorkers have been celebrating spring this way (inspired by a similar tradition on the White House lawn), we have taken to the pagan Victorianisms with a vengeance. This year, all manner of local talent was recruited—including makeup artists from *Cats* to paint kids' faces and the Rockettes to lead a bunny hop. All events have been thoughtfully updated to make them noncompetitive and mostly trauma-free.

Barbara Ensor



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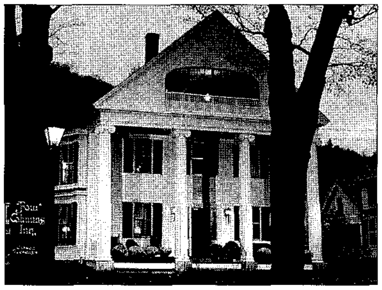

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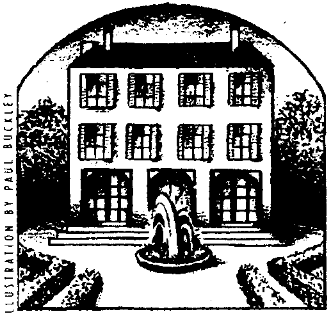
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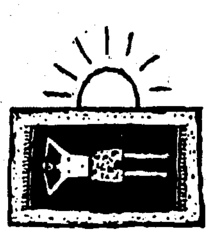

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Issue Date: 5/20 On Sale: 5/13 Ad Closing: 4/26

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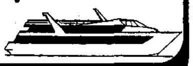

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Issue Date: 5/27 On Sale: 5/20 Deadline: 5/3

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The Best Doctors In New York last appeared in 1991 and is the single most requested issue in the history of New York Magazine. More eyes on us means more eyes on your advertising!

For Info, call Michelle Krell at 212-545-3672
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Seeking My Other Half—Good-looking, 50s, 5'10", 175, NY wit, sensitive, caring, secure, loves romantic settings, blues, art, Knicks, Sunday Times, cuddling, great conversation. Desires a slim, beautiful, bright woman of substance, with style, who is upbeat, loves fun, mentally youthful, to share the joys of life. Photo please. 6229 ✉

Woman Seeking Woman—Classy, all-American beauty needs a break from intense career, with her Latin counterpart: an unattached, ultra-feminine, genuine head-turner with consummate personality, who glows in the dark. Interests include photography, fine dining, fitness and travel. No smokers. Photo a must. 6202 ✉

Alone But Appealing—31, 5'9", trim Jewish male, ambitious but modest, Ivy grad but blue-collar attitude, prosperous but grounded, nonreligious but spiritual, reflective but handsome. Seeking slim female, beautiful, earthy, intelligent and enigmatic. Note/photo. 6176 ✉

Handsome, Athletic—33-year-old Wall Street professional seeks slim, very attractive female with heart of gold. If you're liberal, sensitive and willing to tolerate a recovering workaholic, let's talk. Note/photo/phone. 6264 ✉

Paid My Dues—Very intelligent, very honest, very handsome Jewish man, 5'7", 150 lbs, loves children and animals, seeks similar woman to adore, 32-45, who enjoys the simple pleasures. Photo and note preferred. 6179 ✉

Affluent Scandinavian-American—Investor seeks slender Scandinavian, Dutch or German beauty, 23-30. Your fairy tale can come true. Please be ambitious, bright and fitness-oriented. I'm well-educated, sophisticated yet down-to-earth, young-at-heart, adventurous, 36, 6'1", single white male, attractive, extremely fit. Never married, no children. Enjoy international travel, antiques, motorcycles and live music. Note/photo a must. 6237✉

Love Is Good Sense—Blue-eyed, blond, slim ex-model, prefers jeans on Sunday nights to cocktail dress Saturday nights. Seeks fit male teddy bear, 50-62, affectionate, sense of humor, financially stable, to share friends, lovely apartment and eclectic life style. Traveled widely, at ease walking in Park or lunching at "21". Likes most music, CNN. My career involves art, antiques, design. I have no children; would like to inherit a family. Note/photo/phone. 6276 ✉

Be Mine Forever—Be my best friend, my partner in life, my lover and my true love forever. I'm a 40, single white Jewish male in Manhattan, 6'1", fit, attractive, very wealthy and (I'm told) very sexy. I'm into the arts, travel, shopping and good TV. I'd love to spoil you and let you spoil me. I love kids and dogs (have none, want both). You are smart, funny, very pretty, 25-35, and tired of being single. My heart has so much love in it to give, sometimes it hurts. Photo/phone a must. 6198 ✉

Impossible—For anyone to describe himself fully in a brief ad without sounding pompous or or inane. So, simply stated, I am a 60ish, bicoastal (NY-LA), successful, energetic man, hoping to meet a very attractive, intelligent, interesting, youthful, sensual woman with good sense of humor. Possible? Note/recent photo, please. 6223 ✉

Magazine Publisher—Seeks new Cover Girl. All-American, very handsome regular guy, 35 (but looks 5-7 years younger), looking for someone special to share a big old country house, wit, laughter, achieving personal goals, active sports, travel and fun! Would appreciate someone traditional but hip, very bright, good-looking, curvaceous and well-built, 24-31. Note/photo/phone for reply. 6238 ✉

Come Be My Blanket—Attractive, trim, 5'3", youthful woman, 40s, genuine, with killer smile, still curious about life, plus great wit. Seeks teammate used to working hard/playing hard - enjoys the finer things in life and still has a twinkle in his eye. Note/photo. 6174 ✉

Stimulating CEO/Inventor—A diverse, spontaneous, nice-guy type, adventurous and handsome, muscular, tall, humorous, 40, creative. Looking for affectionate, bright lady under 36, tallish, for romance/family. Phone/photo necessary. 6251 ✉

Beautiful Author/Columnist—Desirable, exciting, witty - seeks smart, special, 50ish best friend/lover. Photo. 6252 ✉

Spring Fun—Man, 43, Italian roots, seeks woman for springtime fun and possibly more. Phone please. 6216 ✉

Hamptons/Palm Beach/NYC—Professional man, Jewish, divorced, 50s, athletic, Brooks Brothers type, nonsmoker (enjoys theater and bicycling), with homes in south Florida and Manhattan...would like to meet attractive, personable lady with home in Hamptons. Photo and phone exchanged. 6170 ✉

Gold Doesn't Rust—Therapist with heart of gold, good looks, fit, sincere, successful white male, 54, 5'6", seeks pretty Manhattan female, nonsmoker, 30-48, 5'2" plus, to share fun, conversation and more, for friendship and romance. Note/phone/recent photo. 6178 ✉ ☎

Mom, How Did You Meet Dad?—He advertised for me in NY Magazine. I read the ads each week but had never answered one before. But his ad was so different and cute - just like him! He wrote that he was 39, tall, fit, fun, creative, romantic, sincere, Jewish and ready again. He described me perfectly too: smart, independent, warm, caring, pretty, slim, 29-37, with a great sense of humor. So, I answered...he called...we met...had instant chemistry...and have been together ever since. 6241 ✉

Wonderful Combination—Exciting, single black female, 36 - loves the ballet, baseball and museums. Great conversation and sense of humor in a warm, imaginative man wanted. Note/photo. 6171 ✉

[END

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Ordinary Miracles Happen Every Day—Great guy, 42, Jewish, secure, loves to sing, write poetry, NY sports, Sinatra, dining, humor. Seeks woman, 32-45, to share all. Be honest, caring, sincere and I'll give back this and more. 6255 ✉ ☎

In Search Of Sparks—Sultry woman of intriguing contrasts - successful professional with unconventional spirit, charm, great looks and legs, 43, 5'5", 110 lbs - seeks accomplished man with maverick heart, 35-55. Note and Kodak moment. 6165 ✉

No Mice Need Apply—Accomplished, attractive, active, alive, tall, slim Manhattan female, big brown eyes, great legs - looking for a home for her heart. Seeks white male, 55-65. 6269 ✉

CT/NY, Handsome Male—With JFK looks, Catholic, educated, never married, 35, successful and truly fun. Looking for a cover girl, Ivory girl or the girl next-door, 28-35, for a truly spectacular life. Please send note and photo. 6208 ✉

"Friends" Real-Life Ross—Only blond, not as serious, not into bugs, and my ex isn't a lesbian. I'm 30, Jewish, attractive, financially secure professional, very fit and muscular, funny and have a great attitude toward life. Looking for a Jewish woman, 25-35, secure with self, athletic, attractive, into: romance, travel and snuggling during Thursday night TV. We'll be friends and maybe more. Note/photo. 6266 ✉ ☎

Attractive Christian Professional—Down-to-earth American (Italian descent), dark hair and eyes, kind, age 33, seeking male professional, age 33-43, who is emotionally secure and ready for a committed relationship. Note/photo/phone. 6192 ✉

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Sensual, Bisexual Redhead—With hourglass figure, long tresses, intelligent, cultured, seeks highly successful, quality gentleman who feels he deserves the finer things in life. 6218 ✉

Extremely Attractive—Professional Jewish male, 27, dark hair, green eyes, well-built, 5'10", 175, warm, affectionate, spontaneous, fun-to-be-with, seeks exceptionally attractive, slender female, 22-29. Note/photo. 6190 ✉

Breakfast At The Met—Beautiful, slender, athletic brunette - loves the arts, music, theater, the outdoors and fine food. Seeking ambitious and successful (30-42), fun-loving, athletic, family-minded man with similar interests. Note/phone/photo. 6228 ✉ ☎

Upbeat Redhead—28, professional female, seeks witty, secure white male over 28, to enjoy all of the things we have and don't have in common. Photo. 6274✉

Give Me An Inch And I'll Take...—You to the French Riviera. Handsome, cultured, athletic, single white male, Greek, Mediterranean looks, financially secure, 37, fit. Likes tennis, travel, beach. Seeking single white female, 28-40, slim, sweet, attractive, for fun, travel, companionship. Photo, please. 6224 ✉

Cute, Single, Jewish Professional—Female, 45, looking to connect with sharp, smart, white professional male for sharing and laughter. Note/phone. 6280 ✉ ☎

Single, Autonomous Businessman—Would like to meet a self-aware, financially and emotionally secure, attractive, kind lady under 50. Photo essential. 6211 ✉

Russian Lady—Professional, 45, 5'3", pretty and athletic, seeking intelligent, caring man to share life/family. 6172 ✉

Attractive Jewish Queens Widow—5'7", nonsmoker, semi-retired accountant, seeks tall, compatible widower, 67 plus. Interests: piano, fitness, dining out, good conversation. 6167 ✉

Lively, Smart, Attractive—Creative, professional Jewish woman, 32, looking for a good guy, 30-38, who's smart, attractive, funny and accomplished. Note/photo/phone. 6203 ✉

Pretty European Woman—40, long blond hair, 5'7", smart, open-minded, East Village sensibilities, in graduate social work program at university. Animal lover who also enjoys movies, music, books and good food. Looking for man, 33-45, of like mind. Photo a must. 6243 ✉

Fun, Sweet Ivy Grad—Attractive professional, 31, 6', fit, white man - seeks nice, intelligent, attractive, slim, 24-33, over 5'3" woman for romance. I enjoy dining, movies, music, museums and politics. Photo please. 6253 ✉

Primary Focus—Committed relationship. Just turned 51, handsome, very young at heart, upbeat, fun to be with, great sense of humor, varied interests. Seeks like female, to mid 40s, energetic, attractive and fit. Note/phone/photo a must. 6258 ✉

Fantastic Forty—5'5", fit, head-turner with spirit and style. Almost have it all - two great kids, success in business, happy (516) home. Seeking attractive, accomplished, above-average man, 40-50. Please send note/photo. 6196 ✉ ☎

Incurable Romantic—45, seeks shapely lady of inner/outer beauty, to find romance and dreams. Note/photo. 6262✉☎

Petite, Perky, Well-Educated—Well-world-traveled professional without dependents, seeks nonsmoking man, 50s, who cares about social justice and likes out-of-doors. Photo a plus. 6244 ✉ ☎

Ultra-Smart Guy—Formerly in Guinness! Nonreligious gentile, seeks slim lady, 30s, Manhattan. POB 539, NYC 10101

Ready For A Career Change?—Young 43, considered handsome, athletic (6', 180 lbs), Italian descent, never had kids, educated, financially secure, with a sense of humor and a sense of purpose, strong and confident but totally unpretentious. Seeks marriage-minded Christian female, fit and attractive, 25-35 with strong family values, who likes to cook and would like children. Hope you also share my zest for life: movies, music, museums, dining out, my convertible and Caribbean beaches - with or without the kids. Note/photo. 6205 ✉☎

Commitment-Minded Man—Tall, handsome, graying hair. Successful businessman, generous, intelligent. Sportsman, who also likes books, classical music, museums, travel and some home cooking. NY and CT residences. Would like to meet a younger, slim, thinking woman of medium height, in her late 30s or early 40s, with family values and a warm heart, whose biological clock is still ticking, and who desires children of her own, security and love. Phone/photo/letter. 6239 ✉

Great Guy Seeks Great Woman!—Who doesn't? But I'm worth it! Warm, interesting, Jewish, good-looking, Ivy-educated attorney, 26, 5'10", seeks Jewish woman, 22-28, intelligent, attractive. Note/photo. 6164 ✉

Happiness, Commitment—In marriage, is important to this Jewish professional male seeking kind female, 34-39, to share the future. Photo. 6263 ✉

Can Lightning Strike Twice?—Are you a classy, once-married, preferably petite woman with a taste for travel, the arts and the companionship of this optimistic, healthy, cultured, widowed Jewish professional man in his mid 60s? 6210 ✉

Female - Creative—Seeks Wall Street male for merger/not acquisition - right-brain interior with corporate exterior, slim, shapely, 45, open-minded, Wasp, well-educated, well-traveled - loves Soho, wine tasting, gardening, jazz. Looking for the real thing! Note/photo/phone. No smokers. 6247 ✉ ☎

Beautiful Woman MD—Warm, upbeat, Jewish, 46 - seeks special man. 6267 ✉

Female Photographer—World-traveled but not weary, mid 40s, a new calm and rambunctious heart - wishes to meet male, 50 plus. Letter/photo. 6188 ✉

Blond Beauty—Brains and body, 5'2", eyes of blue, 42, successful author/illustrator, athletic, warm, caring, is seeking a kind, thoughtful, fit, attractive gentleman, 37-47, comfortable on trails or in tails - to share life's adventures. Sense of humor essential. Note/photo. 6242 ✉ ☎

Pretty, Sexy Blond Female—40, fit and feminine, seeks successful, energetic, professional Jewish male, 39-48, for life's possibilities. Note/phone/photo. 6259 ✉

Midtown MD—45, 5'10", 185. Interests include the arts, travel, restaurants. Seeks very attractive lady, health oriented. Great legs a plus. Note/photo/phone. 6231 ✉

Youthful, Tall, Pretty—Jewish widow, 57, seeks financially secure, caring man, 60s, for friendship/fun. Photo. 6212✉☎

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Tender, Caring Woman—(Writer, small and pretty) wants to be involved with intelligent, empathetic man - open, loving, able to be vulnerable. Do you need a close, exclusive relationship with a special woman? 55 plus. 6249 ✉

Warm, Brown-Eyed Beauty, PhD—With passion for life - athletic, slender, playful Jewish woman, 40s, seeks fit, active, bright soul mate - a man to treasure, with warmth, humor and depth, ready for the best in fun, friendship and love. 6245 ✉ ☎

Good-Looking CPA—5'10" Jewish man, 42, likes movies and dining. Seeks sweet, slim, pretty woman. Photo. 6246 ✉

Seeking Beautiful Italian Female—Bright, handsome, trim CEO seeks a very special Italian female for a loving relationship. Note/photo. 6215 ✉

Take My Heart—But be gentle. Romantic, intelligent, pretty, petite Jewish widow, 50s, seeking witty, bright, good-looking man of substance and integrity, 50-60, to share life's adventures. Photo. 6175 ✉

Attractive, Relaxed Attorney—Investor, 49, who enjoys tennis, gardening, travel... well-positioned to share meaningful friendship with slim, playful Asian or Latina woman for spring, summer and beyond. Note/phone/photo. 6199 ✉

Body Hunter—Looking to retire, 31, Jewish professional, adventurous brunette with beauty inside and out, looking for Jewish male, 28-37, with same. 6273 ✉ ☎

Hold Your Horses—Seeking cultured equestrian gentleman to share horseback-riding and/or carriage-driving activities in CT and NY. 6214 ✉ ☎

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For Widows Only—Tall, dark, handsome, successful Jewish guy, early 40s, sincere, honest, fun, fit, sexy. Enjoys dining out, working out, making out. Seeks committed relationship with pretty Jewish widow, to 44, with good values and Lonnie/Pamela Anderson-type looks. Note/photo a must. 6268 ✉

Opera Fan—Handsome professional male, 60s, seeks tall, elegant, independent, opera-loving lady, early 50s, as travel companion July/August. If chemistry clicks, romance would be lovely. Manhattan only. Photo essential. 6236 ✉ ☎

_anted Open Minded Person—Man or woman, about 30, for adventure, fun and kindness. I'm an attractive, single woman, 6', who is honest and fun. 6277 ✉ ☎

Looking For Passion—Age 38, divorced Christian male seeks a woman who is sensitive and caring. I work with homeless children, love the great outdoors, movies and art. Note/photo. 6225 ✉

Excellent Life Adventurer—Pretty, 36, Jewish attorney - plays tennis, golf, runs, skis, bikes. Spirited, refined, open, stable, aware, caring... Seeks same in cute Jewish guy, 5'8" plus, with graduate degree, 37-46, in/by NYC, athletic, committed to work, play, love - always. Photo. 6206 ✉

New In NY—After 5 years in Tokyo, I've just moved to NYC. Am native Californian male, 37, finance professional. Looking for female, 25-35, with common interests, to see the town. Photo/note please. 6279 ✉

Soon Ready For Less Work—And more play - bridge (beginner), travel, museums, film, dining and hugs. Are you my Jewish soul mate who wants to meet this 5'7", attractive female teacher, 52? 6270 ✉ ☎

Will You Still Need Me—Will you still feed me, when I'm 64? Well? Successful Jewish male, good looks, good health, seeks attractive woman, 48-52, with warmth and humor. Photo. 6219 ✉

One Great Woman—Seeks a 5'11" plus, fit, warmhearted, bright, established Jewish male. If morality, intimacy and humor are important to you, this tall, sensuous, classy yet earthy, mid 40s, fit, curvy brunette with captivating smile, would like to meet you for fun and romance. 6204 ✉ ☎

Beautiful Green Eyes—Very pretty businesswoman seeks very bright, tall, centered, loving man, 45 plus, for a lasting relationship. 6235 ✉ ☎

Highly Intelligent—Single, white Jewish male, NJ professional, 5'10", slim, mid 40s, never married - enjoys ballroom dancing, classical music and travel. Desires attractive professional woman who's interested, as I am, in marriage and parenthood. Photo. 6200✉

Rare Woman—55, internationally educated, smart, energetic - seeks a man to share life with forever. Letter and photo, please. 6173 ✉

Gay Woman—49, professional, good-looking, sense of humor, loves the art scene in NYC as much as the rustic views outside of it. I value old ties but am open to new ones. Are you? Nonsmoker. 6163✉

I Am A Beautiful, Tall—30s, white female - into fitness, food, the right man, financially secure, feminine and sensitive. Please write. 6230 ✉ ☎

New To 50s—Pathwise, model-pretty, 115, 5'7", Yale, NYU, NYC designer, seeks IQ, big heart, small ego, single professional, 50s. Photo exchanged. 6193✉☎

Motown-Bred Manhattanite—Single white female editor with good looks, a good laugh, and the for-realness and jazz/R&B rockability of the Rust Belt... seeks sensual, reliable professional, single/divorced white male, age 40-50, with the wit, savvy and romance of NYC. 6195 ✉ ☎

Playful—Pretty, smart, successful writer, Jewish, 41, seeks seriously loving, seriously funny man. 6222 ✉

Eat Drink Man Woman—Busy, attractive female, 33, business owner, is interested in spending time with a romantic, handsome professional. Appreciation of fine foods and wine, dogs and travel is a must, along with a good sense of humor. Note with photo, please. 6189 ✉

Asian Princess Sought—By successful professional, tall and trim, athletic, good-looking male (37). Please be sweet, sincere, slim, and enjoy movies, travel and fine dining. Skier and rollerblader a plus! Photo, please. 6186 ✉

Attractive Female Physician—Mid 30s, Jewish (nonreligious), seeks fun-loving, degreed male intellectual under 45, with eclectic tastes and good moral and family values. Phone/note/photo. 6197 ✉ ☎

Looking For A Man—Of depth and substance - by an intelligent, down-to-earth, attractive Asian woman, MD, mid 30s, to share all the joy a healthy relationship can bring. 6169 ✉

Successful Woman Of Style—Substance and savvy - 39, tall, curvy. Equally comfortable in black tie or jeans, seeks Renaissance man with style, warmth, passion and humor. Note/photo. 6201 ✉

_anted: 50-Plus Man—For Jewish, pretty, slim, cultured; Moscow-born. 6185 ✉

Manhattan Entrepreneur—45, 5'10", 185. Likes dining out, movies, fashion, architecture, talk radio. Seeks extremely pretty lady, nonsmoker, ambitious, upbeat. Note/photo/phone. 6232 ✉

Fun-Loving, Adventurous Male—Professional - enjoys tennis, travel, dancing, beach, fine restaurants. Seeks 28-40, bright, self-confident, vivacious woman with sense of humor, to be best friend and lover. Note/photo/phone. 6177✉

Corporate Guy—With creative soul, financially secure and emotionally available, single, white Christian man. Looking for warm, attractive, over 5'3", 30s, 40s or 50s (i.e. open to younger or older), (212) woman for friendship leading to romantic commitment. Note/photo, please. 6168 ✉

Holistic Physician, Young 47—Handsome, Jewish, 5'7", healthy and fit, seeks very attractive professional woman for committed relationship. Open to marriage and children. Be spiritually aware, healthy and fit, spontaneous, honest and adventurous, under 5'6"/under 42, and enjoy the outdoors. Photo. 6260 ✉ ☎

Ivy CFO/COO/CEO—40s, seeks beautiful, professional, successful woman in 30s, for relationship. Photo. 6181 ✉ ☎

Round, Soft, Rubenesque—40ish woman, seeking you. I am an entrepreneur, somewhat successful, recent corporate escapee. I am mother of a beautiful 10-year-old son. I am warm, smart, funny, compassionate and I love to sing and dance...Beatles, Joni Mitchell, Sound Of Music, Celine Dion, Hootie, church hymns. I love to read, see a good movie, a Broadway show, opera on occasion, and I love the feel of the warm sun on my face. I have landed, and am ready for you. You are interested in a relationship and are: kind, funny, flexible, a good communicator, faithful, Christian, and the kind of guy that is fun to hang out with and could be a great dad. Write and send a photo, please. 6187 ✉

Handsome, Athletic, Funny—Jewish, young 38, attorney, Paul Reiser looks - enjoys movies, tennis, rock 'n' roll, golf and the outdoors. Seeks pretty, bright woman for romance and lasting future. Tall/athletic a plus. Photo, please. 6271 ✉ ☎

Sensuous Blond With Spring Fever—Highly educated, professional Jewish lady, 5'7", seeks Jewish male counterpart - JD/MD/investment banker/businessman, 42-52 - divorced/widowed gentleman preferred, kids okay. Together, we can share romantic candlelight dinners, a spirited sense of humor, sports, travel and theater. Note/phone/photo. 6162 ✉

Slim, Pretty (And Pretty Sane) Shrink—Active, independent, happy with career, friends and life, seeks previously married man, 47-57, of similar spirit, for possible great relationship. Note/photo. 6194 ✉ ☎

If You Cruise In A Sailboat—Instead of a bar, have lunch on the hook versus brunch with a schnook; if you'd rather be singing with wind in your hair, send me a note and I'll be there. I'm male, 43, 5'9", sane, smart, stable and correct. 6272 ✉

Edward And Mrs. Simpson '96 Replay?—Kind, adorable, bearded, nonsmoking, 49, London-based British writer - seeks joyful, slim, under 35 years, over-5'8", American princess for (minimum seven a day) cuddles, (lots of) laughs, love and life(?). Photo appreciated. e.mail adel@mid.win-uk.net. 6257 ✉

Extremely Successful—European background, blue-eyed, handsome executive for worldwide operating company, seeking attractive, mid 20s-early 30s female for long-lasting, rewarding relationship, because I'm sure that you deserve the best. 6180 ✉

Super-Handsome, Super-Successful—Stylish and literary exec, 40, seeks pretty, slender, curvy, down-to-earth woman under 35. Must love beaches, dogs, romance. Photo/note/phone. 6221 ✉

Vibrant, Handsome MD—Seeking soul mate for a lifetime adventure. I'm in mid 40s, 6'2", athletic and love theater, sports, cuddling, romantic dinners. I'm searching for voluptuous, zaftig Jewish female with a sensational laugh that will grab my heart. No reply without full photo. 6265 ✉

Seeking Wife—Successful, well-established white male seeks a 30-something white female for love and marriage. I'm 48, 5'10", muscular, attractive and fit. I have a broad range of interests, with the capacity to love and a willingness to share and compromise. I'm seeking commitment-minded white female to share love, rainbows, laughs, smiles and tears - forever. Note and photo a must. 6182 ✉

Slim, Seductive, Leggy Lady—Seeks elegant, successful, charming man. I'm 48, 5'8", red hair, blue eyes. You are smart, refined, good-looking and affectionate. Note/photo preferred. 6184 ✉

Exceptional, Beautiful ICU RN—32, 5'7", redhead, nonsmoker - intriguing, selective woman with head-turning looks, who is secure, caring, passionate, cultured and hysterically funny - seeks successful, intelligent professional with depth, who is confident, honest, affectionate and witty. You won't be disappointed. Note/photo. 6256 ✉

Attractive, Warm, Caring—Holistic, blue-eyed blond professional, 39, seeking fit, warmhearted, understanding man who takes good care of himself and his relationships, for long-term commitment, films, travel, laughter. Photo. 6166 ✉

ynda Carter Look-Alike—5'4", 112 lbs, 3, mother of two, seeks handsome pro-essional male, 35-45, who's physically/motionally fit, ready for a life of passion nd adventure. Photo a must. 6233 🖂 ☎

teal My Heart—Adventurous man, IBA, young 49, 6', trim, with diverse iterests, seeks bright Christian lady, trim, onsmoker, who's family-inclined. (212), 718), (516). Note/photo. 6209 🖂

nna-Nicole Smith - Where Are You?—'all, athletic, handsome attorney, 36, eeks buxom beauty to dine, dance, cuddle nd laugh. Note/photo. 6278 🖂

Professional Heartthrob—Cardiologist, 42, tall, eclectic, handsome, palpitation-producing combination of healthy, very wealthy and wise. Tennis champ, author, jazz pianist, MBA, with high moral values and sincere gentlemanly qualities. Catholic, nonsmoker. Seeks refined marriage-minded lady. Note/photo. 6261🖂

Funny Lady Wanted—Attractive Jewish entrepreneur, 40, with interests in health, fitness, tennis - seeks considerate, successful, thin, tall, pretty executive woman in her 30s, for casual dining, cuddling and commitment. Please, no cats or smokers. Send note/photo a must. 6183 🖂

Let's Laugh Together!—Well-educated teacher, 5'8", 35, Irish-Catholic woman, full-figured, friendly, funny, fantastic! Enjoys old movies, reading, horseback riding, outdoors, Manhattan, romance and quiet evenings. If you're a man, 35-45, educated and warm, with similar interests, let's get together. 6240 🖂 ☎

As Down-To-Earth As They Come—Very pretty, slim, fit, kindhearted, 41, 5'5", divorced, but most important is my friendliness, humor and ability to form wonderful relationships. Seek a real human being. I'm head of marketing for major publisher. Letter/photo/phone, please. 6227 🖂

Classy, Successful CPA—Athletic, caring mensch, jazz/theater lover, seeks funny Jewish fox, 32-38, ready for global merger/subsidiaries. 6275 🖂 ☎

Untraditional MD, Teacher—Called handsome, 45, 5'10", socially conscious, athletic - seeks warm, reflective, beautiful, like-minded woman, 30s, for serious relationship/family(?). Photo/letter. 6254🖂

Nurturer—Charming, sweet, smart, very handsome, athletic, solvent artist, mid 40s, seeks tall, very attractive female counterpart. Photographer/writer/musician a plus. Photo/phone. 6213🖂☎

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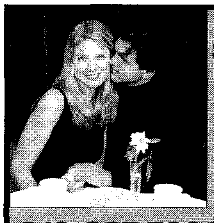

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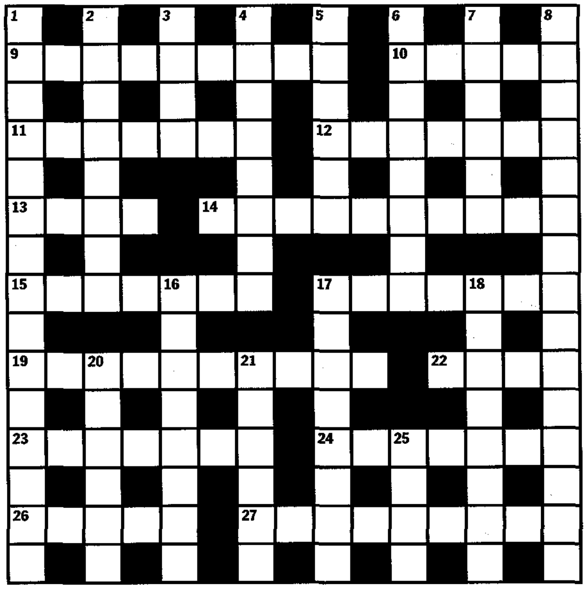
Say I LOVE YOU, POO - or HAPPY BIRTHDAY BABY... Reach old friends or that attractive stranger you met at MOMA...
ASSORTMENTS
NEW YORK's Weekly Bulletin Board
212-779-7500

The 'Guardian' Crossword

ACROSS
9 Mail one sent to club by sort of cord. (9)
10 Ruler rejected by a religious devotee. (5)
11 Second seaman in industrial area, all over the plant. (7)
12 Being disturbed, snored quietly in reply. (7)
13 Staple blow. (4)
14 Old grouch has gone mad after finding dirt on dog. (10)
15 Summarily executed novice about to refuse to enter church. (7)
17 Dead meat and scrap iron on vehicle. (7)
19 Name medic? Name bad planners! (4,3,3)
22 Cast of thousands so terribly backward. (4)
23 Prepared for the moment. (7)
24 Reenter, clumsy and earthy. (7)
26 Drink to acidity's first letter. (5)
27 Tailors are endlessly involved in such matters. (9)

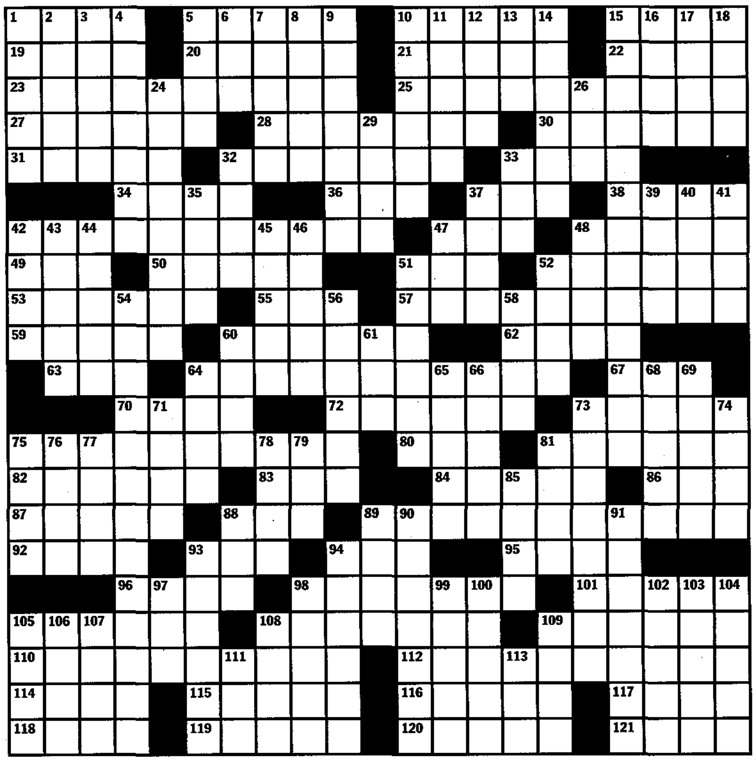


DOWN
1 Cloud endlessly rising in cumulative effect of short life. (10,5)
2 Bath of forgiveness? Not so. (8)
3 A little man turns out to be a pest. (4)
4 Heading for the Arctic or stuck there? (3-5)
5 Warning of a painting being upside down. (6)
6 Man with a mission is not so nice about it. (8)
7 Wood and raw material taken off ship. (6)
8 Close behind calluses, say? (4,2,4,5)
16 Greeting leads to a thaw softening one Native American . . . (8)
17 . . . what's made another hold a furrow up? (8)
18 10 crimes perhaps chemically related. (8)
20 Morsel to munch when entering. (6)
21 Hate to send up Eliot and Hughes. (6)
25 Cross could be over entrance. (4)

'Hippety-Hop': 'Cue' Crossword • By Maura B. Jacobson

ACROSS
1 Catch the audio
5 Runs off at the mouth
10 Gluck namesakes
15 Tribulations
19 "—— boy!"
20 City of Northern France
21 Kingdom
22 Woody Guthrie's son
23 Rabbit query
25 Rabbit feature
27 Sonora shawl
28 Contest hopeful
30 —— over (fainted)
31 Cream of the crop
32 Role for Harrison
33 Mock vocally
34 Cadet's sch.
36 Wallet smallie
37 Abbr. on a math proof
38 Mop the orlop
42 Rabbit habit
47 Famed pharaoh
48 Andes land
49 Simple sugar
50 Ancient Mexican culture
51 "—— was saying . . ."
52 Lyndon —— Johnson
53 Restraining rope
55 A Turner
57 Review of the past
59 Kind of being
60 Brewer of '50s pop
62 Cut from the budget
63 Part of r.p.m.
64 Springtime rabbit
67 "He is a wise man —— fool": Blake
70 Rank above viscount
72 Fatal food
73 Dancer Verdon, et al.
75 Flight-tower equipment
80 SPCA pickup
81 Scotto or Tebaldi
82 Elicit
83 Religeuse
84 Retort to "are not!"
86 Pie plate
87 Bandages, with "up"
88 Shortchange
89 Kind of rabbit
92 Wife of Esau
93 Coltrane's instrument, informally
94 Dearie
95 Brink
96 Ballpark verdicts
98 To the point
101 Adlai's running mate
105 Create a harmonious sound
108 Scam
109 Halve
110 "Rabbit" author
112 Baseball's Rabbit
114 Ripened, as cheese
115 Longs
116 —— donna
117 The Campbells, e.g.
118 Slams into
119 Disgorge
120 Mideast peninsula
121 Apropos of

DOWN
1 Place for a ship's cable
2 Lucy's TV friend
3 Video-game name
4 Drumbeat
5 Picasso period
6 Type of service or reader
7 Pilgrim suitor
8 Fair of hair
9 Neighborhood
10 Esoteric
11 Mrs. Helmsley
12 One of the Dillons
13 Ht. above sea level
14 Needed an ashtray
15 Rabbit enclave, in a novel
16 Ph.D. test
17 Nobelist Wiesel
18 "Gone," at auctions
24 Sample organism
26 Maiden-named
29 Chimed
32 In a lackadaisical way
33 Boeing product
35 On —— with (on equal footing)
37 Chuck the job
39 Sangria ingredient
40 Evelyn Waugh's brother
41 Better than better
42 Closet pest
43 Drain the available quantity of
44 "—— Entertain You"
45 Finger Lakes county
46 Motionless
47 Between Mao and tung
48 Look the joint over
51 Language of Kuwait
52 Squarish
54 Catch-me game
56 Make less shallow
58 —— of Kutch (marshland of India)
60 After-bath sprinkle
61 Hit-show sign
64 Gaelic dialect
65 Customary
66 Average standards
68 Ranch in "Giant"
69 Caper
71 Curved lines
73 19th C. British monarch
74 Torpedoed
75 Singer McEntire
76 Gung ho
77 Actress Merrill
78 Cameo gemstone
79 Doggy
81 Crucifix
85 Amish pronoun
88 Car fill-up
89 "The World of Suzie ——"
90 Sets up a tent
91 Angela's writer role
93 Russian plain
94 Like Abe
97 Burmese statesman
98 Familiar soft drinks
99 Japanese porcelain
100 Canary's kin
102 Narrates
103 Star quality
104 Exec's scribe
105 Somewhat open
106 "Coriolanus" costume
107 "—— that has, gets"
108 Spanish movie house
109 —— B'rith
111 Archaeological site
113 Doc's org.



Solutions to last week's puzzles appear on page 71.

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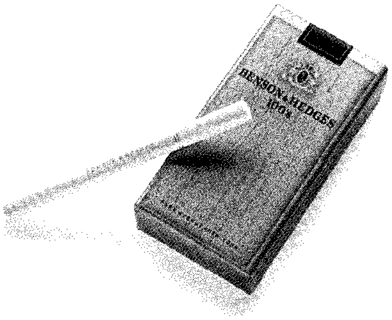
BENSON & HEDGES 100's



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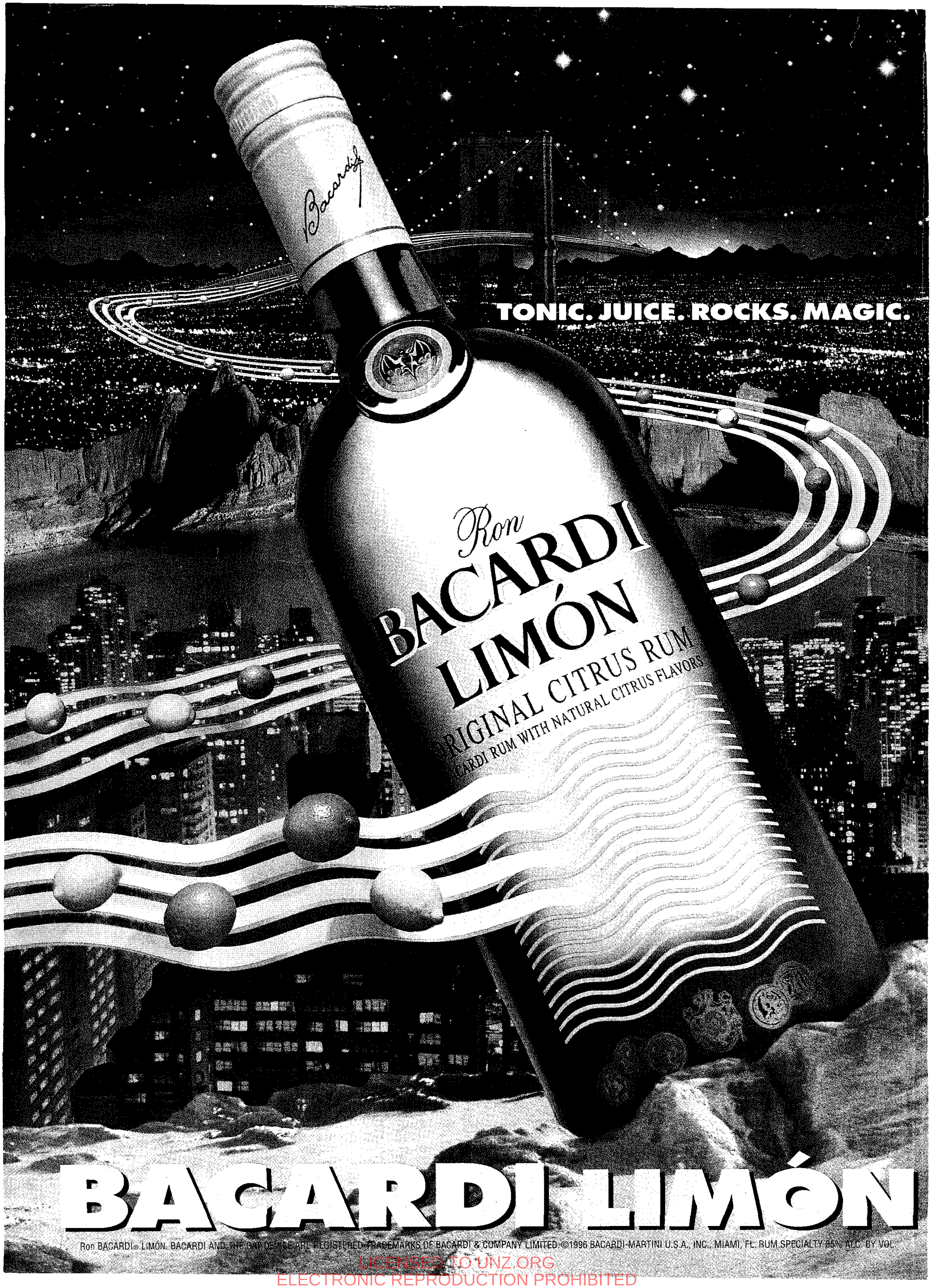
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